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Take children's rights seriously

Kathy Vandergrift

OTTAWA, Ont. – This month marks the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was adopted in a time of optimism at the end of the Cold War, with talk of peace dividends in the air. Ratification by all nations interest of the child is primary for all decisions that affect children. Further, that every child has the right to survive and develop his potential; and lastly, that children are to be heard and allowed to participate, in accordance with the age and maturity of each one.

> Children's rights and parental rights are not contradictory; they are different in kind.

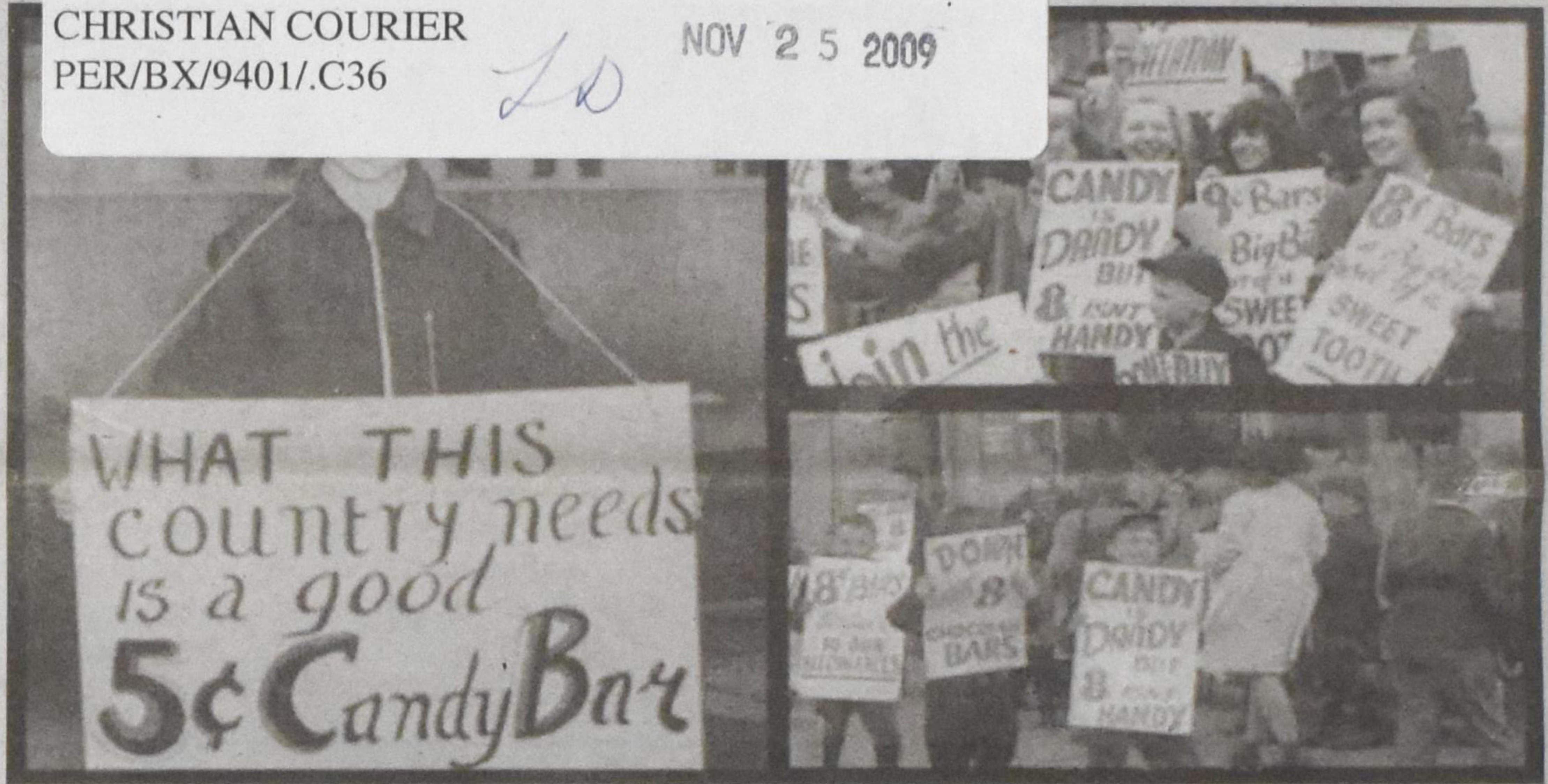
except Somalia and the US came quickly, but implementation remains a challenge. In part, this is because the very notion of children's rights remains controversial. Some Christians are promoters, but others are strongly opposed. Instead of opposing children's rights, however, it is preferable to develop and practice a Christian approach in the field of children's rights, and human rights in general.

Children's rights are distinct from adult human rights because they include components of protection based on the vulnerability of children; sensitivity to age-appropriate provisions, based on the developmental nature of childhood from age 0 - 18; and recognition of multiple duty-bearers, because of the dependence of children on others for provision of basic needs. The 54 articles of the international Convention, which Canada has ratified, address all aspects of growing up, based on four principles. First, non-discrimination: no child should be treated unfairly or excluded. Secondly, that the best

Fears about children's rights

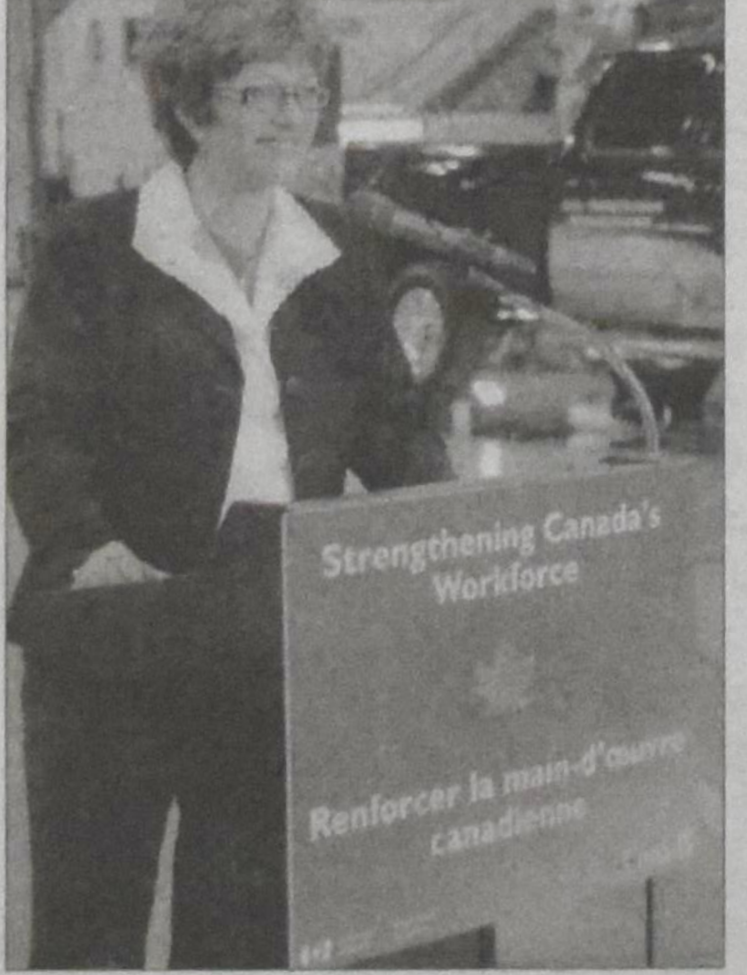
Some allege that rights-talk turns children into self-centered, demanding individualists. In fact, the opposite is true, and this has been documented in applied research. In Hampshire, England, some schools became "Rights Respecting Schools," where children learned and practiced children's rights through three R's: Respect, Responsibility, and Rights.

See **Children's rights** on p.2



In 1947, children on Vancouver Island began a (brief) national protest against a 3-cent hike in post-war candy bar prices. The right to cheap chocolate, however, didn't make it into the UN's declaration in 1989.

EI insufficient in current economy

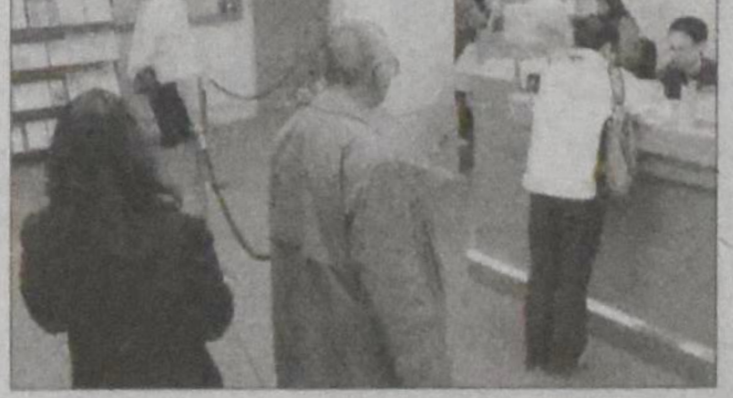


Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, makes a report on changes to EI, including a better online application system.

Chandra Pasma

OTTAWA, Ont. – While Canada's economy is showing some cautious signs of recovery, there are fears that we are headed for a jobless recovery in the wake of the economic crisis. In September, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development predicted that unemployment will reach 10 percent in Canada in 2010, and that it will take a long time to decline from that point.

Since the crisis began, nearly 500,000 Canadians have lost their jobs. Many of these unemployed Canadians have been unable to find new work. Some of them have been able to depend on Employment Insurance (EI) for income. EI provides a social safety net for



the unemployed, a small monthly income that helps them to pay the bills, buy groceries and meet mortgage payments.

However, only half of the unemployed in Canada qualify for EI. And because of the prolonged nature of the recession, many Canadians are exhausting their EI benefits before they can find new work.

Without EI benefits, many of the unemployed are forced to turn to social assistance in order to get by. Unfortunately, a family must use up its entire savings (including RRSPs), max out credit cards and lines of credit, and sell anything they own that is considered an asset in order to qualify for social assistance in most provinces. This will make it very difficult for them to transition back from social assistance to work once jobs become available.

Divisive issue

Because unemployment has been such a significant issue over the past year, EI has become a political hot potato. Before the summer, it looked like we might have an election over EI. The

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Children's rights *continued*

Other schools in the same context did not. Results after three years demonstrated that children who were taught their rights engaged in less disruptive behaviour, were more cooperative with teachers, and engaged in less bullying than students in the other schools. This is also confirmed in international development work with children. Claiming rights and respect for the rights of others go together. That's Biblical.

A second allegation is that children's rights undermine parental authority. Nine articles in the Convention recognize and support the role of parents. The accusation that the Convention is anti-family is often made without actually reading it. Children's rights and parental rights are not contradictory; they are different in kind. Parental rights are fiduciary rights, by virtue of a role, while both children and adults have human rights by virtue of being persons of worth, created in the image of God. Tensions and disputes are part of the sin-affected world; a rights-respecting framework can help to resolve conflicts. Parents should be strong advocates of a rights-respecting culture for raising children.

The test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

A third concern is unreasonable demands on the state. The Con-vention includes the principle of progressive realization, which means gradual progress as resources allow.

In practice, effective action plans set priorities and realistic goals for each situation.

What are the benefits?

Respect for children's rights recognizes children as persons with dignity and value, not only created and loved by God, but also called to be active agents rather than passive recipients of adult actions. When Jesus put a child before the disciples, it was more than a lesson in humility. Jesus was showing them that God's intention is a world where children are treated with the same respect as adults.

Children's lives are affected by decisions made by many different actors and different levels of government. The Convention provides an integrated tool to tie all aspects together and it puts the focus on outcomes and the realities of children's lives.

Young people under 18 are 24 percent of the population in Canada and over 40 percent in most developing countries, but they have no voice and no vote. The Convention promotes participation in public life in age-appropriate ways and the right to be heard in decisions that affect their development. That's how young people learn to be responsible citizens.

Children's rights are for all children. It is not good enough when a majority of children are doing well. The focus turns to the marginalized or socially excluded. That is consistent with the repeated Scriptural spotlight on orphans as one of the barometers of justice.

The record in Canada

How are we doing in Canada? Not so well. Canada's third report on implementation of the Convention was due in January 2009; however, it has not been released yet and there is no public discussion. 45 recommendations from the second review are largely ignored. It is not just about reports. Children, especially children in difficult circumstances, pay the biggest price when we ignore children's rights. Among industrialized countries, Canada has one of the highest rates of young people in our child welfare and justice systems and the lowest expenditures on child development. Aboriginal children, homeless children, and children with mental health needs or disabilities are some of the vulnerable groups that are falling through the cracks.

What would change if we took children's rights seriously? Here are some specific, achievable goals: no young person in Canada should need to become a ward of the state or go to prison to get needed help, such as children with disabilities or serious mental health issues; the best interests of children, including aboriginal children, would be put ahead of federal-provincial funding disputes; and children in poor households would be assured an equal opportunity to get a good start in life.

After 20 years, it is time to take children's rights seriously instead of treating the Convention as a nice ideal or a historical trophy. Christians could lead with a covenantal approach that practices mutuality of rights and responsibilities, rather than a narrow contractual approach or opposing children's rights altogether.

Kathy Vandergrift, a public policy analyst, focused her Master's Thesis in Public Ethics on a comparison of different ethical foundations for children's rights. She lives in Ottawa.

Economy *continued from page 1*

Conservatives and Liberals avoided the possibility by creating a blue ribbon panel on the topic. The panel, however, failed to produce any cross-partisan cooperation.

In September, the Conservative government announced changes to the EI system, allowing 5-20 extra weeks for long-term workers who had few or no EI claims in recent years. The Liberals decried the proposed changes as insufficient, but the New Democratic Party agreed to support the bill, ensuring the government's continued survival.

While Bill C-50 does provide some relief to the unemployed whose benefits have run out, the bill does not sufficiently address the shortcomings of EI.

Weaknesses of EI

Half of Canada's unemployed do not even qualify for EI due to stringent entrance requirements, a slight improvement over the pre-recession scenario where only 4 in 10 unemployed Canadians qualified. In half of Canada's major cities, the proportion of unemployed who qualify for benefits is less than 30 percent.

Variable entrance requirements also create very uneven regional access. Workers in Ontario and the Western provinces were significantly less likely to qualify for EI than workers in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces. These variations also created absurdities, where two people working in the same plant were laid off and one qualified for EI based on her home address while the other did not. Meanwhile, oil field workers in Alberta who originate from Atlantic provinces can get higher benefits than their co-workers simply by returning home.

45.5 percent of unemployed men can count on EI, but only 39.1 percent of women. Those in precarious or non-standard work tend to have difficulty accessing EI, even though they are more vulnerable to unemployment, because of the challenge of accumulating enough eligible working hours.

Although the eligibility requirements change when the local job market changes, the system could not respond quickly enough to the challenges of the recession. Even though Ontario was particularly hard hit, many workers in Ontario have been turned down because Ontario was still classified as a low unemployment region.

EI as Social Contract

In order to truly support the unemployed, Canada's EI program needs changes to the eligibility criteria with standard access across the country, a longer benefit period, and a higher rate of insurable earnings.

There are some who oppose these changes, arguing that Canada cannot afford to increase its deficit by providing greater support to the unemployed. However, EI plays an important stimulus role. Without this income, many Canadians simply cannot participate in the economy. The alternative could be a downward spiral, as decreased consumption leads to more layoffs and more unemployed Canadians.

Others worry about "moral hazard" – that a generous EI system will lead to increased unemployment. However, for the 500,000 Canadians who have lost their job since the recession began, unemployment has not been a choice. And even at its most generous, EI is still very low – the most any Canadian can receive under the current system is $21,500 a year. Most receive much less.

Rather than worry about moral hazard, we need to recapture our understanding of EI as a social contract. When people work hard and pay premiums, they should receive support when they lose their jobs. Canada cannot afford to let so many Canadians slide into poverty, victims of a recession they did not cause.

Chandra Pasma is a policy analyst at Citizens for Public Justice.

News

Jesus Christ, movie star

Eternal Student

Peter Schuurman

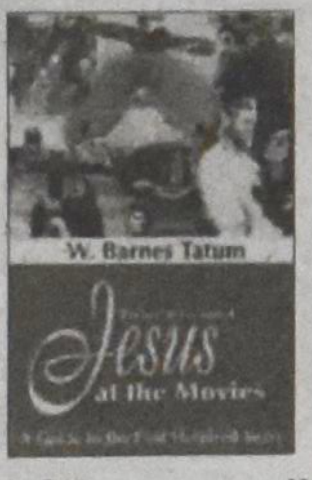
The season of Advent is drawing nigh, and I ask: Which Jesus are we anticipating will arrive?

The fact is there are more than four gospels today. I am currently a teacher's assistant for a course entitled "Religion and Film" at the University of Waterloo. In preparation for a lecture, I did a casual review of the last 100 years of "Jesus" films. University of Ottawa professor Adele Reinhartz says in her book *Jesus of Hollywood*, "Just as the Bible is the best-selling book of all time, so is Jesus the most popular movie subject in the history of cinema." There are over 100 "biopics" (biographical films) of Jesus. Reinhartz contends that "it may well be the case that more people worldwide know about Jesus and his life story from the movies than from any other medium."

That may not be an exaggeration. The *Jesus* film (1979), based on the gospel of Luke and sponsored by Campus Crusade for Christ (now called "The Power to Change") claims their film has been viewed 6 billion times, with 200 million "decisions for Christ" arising from its ministry. Right now the film is available for viewing free on their website in any of 1000 languages. It reveals a Warner Sallman-type of Jesus – a Saviour of personal faith who dies to save individuals from their sins.

The cinematic gospels

As the printing press was to the Reformation, so is the feature film (and You-Tube, etc.) to this new reforming era. One thing that the medium of film accentuates: no matter how reverent Jesus speaks or how serenely divine he glows, he is most definitely and unarguably human. Jesus comes down to earth in film, and our eyes "get a hold" on him in a way the spoken word never could. Details that are left open to the imagination in the text are chosen and put in vivid technicolor film. The consequences of this shift are still undetermined, but they cannot be underestimated.



Each Jesus film could be seen as another pseudo-gospel. W. Barnes Tatum in *Jesus at the Movies: A Guide to the First 100 Years* (1997) suggests four general approaches through the century. The first era he calls "reluctance," when filmmakers were extremely hesitant to experiment on the screen. Next is the era of "reverence," which includes *King of Kings* (1961), which plays up the violence of the Roman Empire and contrasts it with Jesus' words of love in the Sermon on the Mount. This era also includes *The Greatest Story Ever Told* (1965), which was set in the Southwestern U.S. desert and features Jesus as a romantic Western hero. The next period he labels "diversity." Here Jesus appears as a clown-figure telling parables in New York City (*Godspell*, 1973) and as part of a pop music passion play (*Jesus Christ Superstar*, 1973). Finally is the era of "scandal," which we could stretch to include everything from Monty Python's mistaken Messiah in *The Life of Brian* (1979) to the intense and at times befuddled Jesus of *The Last Temptation of Christ* (1988), to, more recently, Mel Gibson's bloody but resilient Jesus in *The Passion of the Christ* (2004).

What could possibly come next?

The end of censorship

If there are one hundred films on Jesus, that means one hundred different actors playing one hundred different Jesuses. Not all are equally wed to the gospels or equally appreciated. Some are devotional in their approach and some are more artistic, if not experimental. Some have been protested, campaigned against, and banned (often only increasing ticket sales!)

The implications of Jesus' new role as movie star are rather immense. No longer are the church and its clergy the sole guardians of story of the Christ. Neither is the academy the revered authority on Jesus' life and thought. The movie director and his crew have now become the primary story-teller for the masses.

The proliferation of images may cause some to call for a return to reactionary Reformed iconoclasm. I hope that we have learned the lesson of the 16th century: to scorn the creative arts is to disparage the incarnation – the celebration of Word made flesh.

Here's a better response: what if the Reformed community found $20 million to make a Jesus film? Could our artists and theologians work together to portray a rabbi Christ who is the King of Creation, who dies and rises again to inaugurate his full-orbed kingdom of justice and peace? What actors, setting, and manners of speech would speak to our times?

Or maybe scale it down to manageable size: what Jesus is your local congregation anticipating this Advent, and how will you dramatize his arrival?

Peter Schuurman lives in Guelph, Ontario where he parents his two children, Joseph and Petra. He is working toward a PhD and teaches World Religion at Redeemer.

Eurovangelism helps Albania

Brian Lise

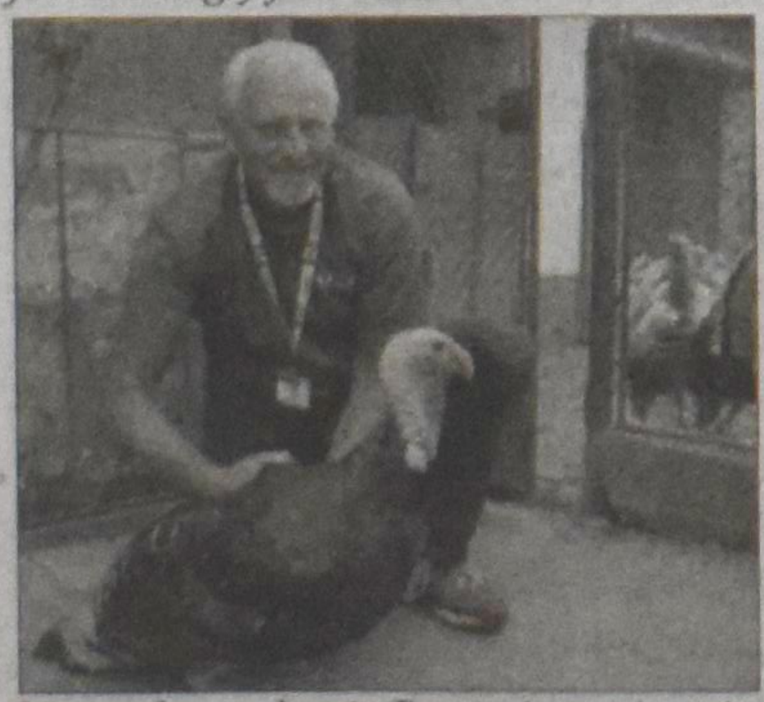
In 1956 a law was passed in the communist country of Albania forbidding all forms of religious activity, talk or worship. This meant that Albania was a completely atheist country with only communism as its "god." Albania is a small country, with the Adriatic Sea to its west, Greece to the south and the former Yugoslavia to the east. This country of three million people was completely isolated from the rest of the world from 1956 to 1992: no God, no religion, no freedom. Communism was able to survive due to deception and fear tactics by the government.

Lise in Romania assisting a CASA team member of Christian Agency for Social Action (CASA) in the distribution of Harvest for the Hungry food boxes.

Besa Shapllo (on right), director of Mission Possible and team member Lidia (on left) with Albania translations of Alpha literature.

Eurovangelism supports local churches and ministries in seeking to re-establish the message of Jesus. We do this by supporting Albanian church planters providing humanitarian aid for local needy families and promoting the Alpha course. On a recent trip to Albania, I saw the impact of the growth of the church. Three years ago when Alpha was started in Albania, about 150 women took the course. However, many of these women did not know how to read or write. Our partner in Albania, Mission Possible, started offering literacy lessons, and today there are over 200 people attending two newly planted churches in the slum area of Bathore just outside the capital city of Tirana.

The rate of unemployment is about 40 percent in Albania. Many family members go to Italy to find some kind of work to support the family. Eurovangelism also supports other national-led ministries by assisting with humanitarian aid for the needy, homeless or unemployed. I was impressed with the dedication, quality and faith of the local Christian leaders in Albania. It's a privilege to be able to support them, so that they in turn can help their own people and show the love of Christ.



Lise with a turkey in Romania, an item in the Eurovangelism Gift Guide.

Rev. Brian Lise is Executive Director of Eurovangelism. Check out eurovangelism.ca or see the Gift Guide insert in this issue for more information.

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Guest Editorial/Editorial

It's not easy to be and do good

May Drost

Just for a moment, consider yourself a participant in the following scenario: A local store is sponsoring a community drive. If customers bring in their "gently used" coats, the store will pass them on to be distributed to the needy; moreover, said customers will be given twenty-five percent off on the purchase of a new coat for themselves.

If you were the storeowner, would you consider this offer a community service or just good business? If you were a customer, would you feel good because you have given something for charity, or might you feel a bit guilty because you have merely gotten rid of a coat you no longer want in exchange for a twenty-five percent reduction on a new one? And what if the coats in question were made in some offshore sweatshop, or this particular chain of stores is guilty of unfair employment practices? What if you already have a good coat beside the one you are giving away: do you really need two when so many have none?

Whatever the case, it is clear that any participant in our sample transaction becomes, for better or for worse, part-nered with a "system" wherein a business can flourish – those who have can get more, and the poor get the leftovers.

Not so simple

Clothe the naked, provide water, feed the hungry, advocate for widows and the imprisoned – the instruct-ions for biblically prescribed good works are the same as they have always been. However, carrying them out seems to have become more complicated now that the whole planet has become a village. How do we get a cup of refreshing water across multiple hostile borders? What clothing can we wear (or give away) that hasn't been compromised by human injustice? For every Walmart we criticize and avoid, there are other stores that do the same kind of business, merely less efficiently. For every needy person we help there seems to be someone abusing the system. Sometimes it's even tough to do something as simple as helping at the local soup kitchen because, as one volunteer put it, "you get so tired of the ingratitude and rudeness of the patrons." It's tough to feed the hand that bites us. (I bet that thought crossed God's mind as he was providing manna for the ungrateful Israelites).

Yet I would argue that systemic injustice, ungrateful recipients, or overwhelming need are relatively minor deterrents to our desire or ability to do good. The major obstacles to Christlike goodness are not external: they lie within us. For one thing, there tends to be a huge chasm between our (sometimes worthy) actions and our (less than worthy) motives. The gospels of Mark and Luke record the incident of the widow's temple offering. At a practical level, the contributions of the wealthy people in the temple have the potential to do much more good than the two copper coins contributed by the poor widow. Yet Jesus observes that, in real terms, the widow's gift is worth more than the gifts of the rich – she has given sacrificially; the others haven't. Obviously, for God it's not about the money, but about the motivation. We can't just send a cheque; we have to *care*!

Engaging the poor

And then there's that common but deadly corroder of hearts, apathy. To separate the worthy causes from the unworthy ones is complicated. To prioritize the worthy causes can be even more difficult when the needs are endless. So we are tempted to put the whole justice and charity issue on the back burner of our lives, leaving matters to the church and philanthropic organizations, which, to be sure, we support financially, especially at Christmas and Thanksgiving. But the God who said, "The cattle on a thousand hills are mine" does not want our money or possessions first of all: he wants our *hearts*. In practical terms, that means we have to *engage in the process* of caring for others; we have to *commit* to those we help. Not easy, but possible.

We are called to do what we can. We can pray that the Spirit will make our hearts capable of selfless love; we can ask God for opportunities to make that love tangible. Then we can dare to act, knowing full well that we might sometimes ally ourselves unwittingly with wrongheaded causes, act out of pride or some other dubious motive, or be part of some systemic injustice we're not even aware of. The anti-hero in Graham Greene's well-known novel, *The Power and the Glory* is guilty on all counts, though near the end of his life, he has tried hard to do good. Yet he cannot see beyond his own failures. Greene describes his final hours before his execution: "Tears ran down his face; he was not at the moment afraid of damnation…. He felt only an immense disappointment that he had to go to God empty-handed, with nothing done at all" (*The Power and the Glory.* Heinemann/Octopus 1977, 848).

Purification process

In the end, all of us have to face the fact that we have let God down by our failure to do justice and love mercy. Nevertheless, we can be assured that we have not lived in vain; we can take courage that the good we have tried to do will be cleansed, shaped and established by our Creator and Redeemer.

Consider the self-composed epitaph of Benjamin Franklin, a thoroughly practical man of action:

The body of
Benjamin Franklin, printer,
(Like the cover of an old book,
Its contents worn out
And stripped of its lettering and gilding)
Lies here, food for worms!
Yet the work itself shall not be lost,
For it will, as he believed, appear once more
In a new
And more beautiful edition, corrected and amended
By its Author!

(*The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 302:1)

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What is your GPS for life?

Bert Witvoet

A seasoned educator I know, who values the development of a biblical, Reformed worldview, told me some time ago that many of his colleagues who teach in Reformed Christian schools avoid discussing worldview. "Worldview causes division," they told him. "Why don't we just try to live a Christian life and teach Scriptural values like honesty and kindness to our students? Life becomes too complicated when you get into discussions on worldview."

I needed to hear what my fellow educator told me. I had been so immersed in developing notes on a biblical worldview for my lectures in South Africa, that I had almost assumed that having such a worldview is considered essential by all Christian educators in North America who call themselves Reformed. I shouldn't have been so naïve. A lot of Christians today, whether they are educators or accountants, dislike labels that set themselves apart from other Christians. They don't much like a denominational identity either. They prefer to be known as "Christians." Let me address these worldview-shy Christians in a personal way.

No blueprint?

Dear fellow believer in Christ, I think I understand your reluct-ance to adopt a specific worldview. But I want to challenge the sense of safety you find in preferring ambiguity. Consciously developing a worldview is not a matter of salvation, of course. You will make it to heaven on the basis of being forgiven through Jesus Christ and living an upright life. Secondly, developing a worldview is not a question of your ultimate identity. Your iden-ity is hidden in Christ, and not in what you do or call yourself.

But saying that you don't want to tie yourself down to a world-view is like a carpenter saying that he doesn't want to build a house according to a blueprint. The main thing in building a house, he may say, is hitting the nail on the head, making sure the structure is square, and selecting quality materials. But don't rob me of my freedom to decide which direction I want to take at any given time. Developing a plan ahead of time causes division. Hmmm. You won't be asked to build my house should I be in the market for one.

What makes your attitude so unhelpful is that having a world-view is unavoidable. Yours may not be a coherent worldview. You may not even be able to spell it out. But somewhere in your mind there are guiding forces that act as a worldview. It's much better if you honestly admit to having a worldview. You would also benefit from working on your worldview with your fellow believers to make sure it has integrity and lines up with God's will for life.

Division not inevitable

And what about the charge that espousing a worldview separates you from other Christians who follow a different blue-print? It happens, but it need not happen. Whether you cause division all depends on *how* you hold your worldview. My advice to you is: relativize the importance of holding a worldview. A worldview will not save you. It does not make you a better Christian than others either. And we know from 1 Corinthians 13 that, if you don't have love, everything you hold dear, including your worldview, is as hollow as a sounding gong. Yet, at the same time, as a faithful worker in God's world, you do well to equip yourself with a biblically-directed Global Positioning System also known as a biblical worldview. After all, Jesus' did not offer you salvation just to make sure you get to heaven. GPS in this case does not stand for Gateway Positioning System. Better to think of it as a way of orienting yourself to the "global" cultural context in which you find yourself.

As you are engaged in the joyful task of participating in the shaping of an obedient culture, celebrate your worldview and test it from time to time. Look upon it as an instrument of peace. At the same time, know that nothing in creation, not even world-views, can separate you from the love of God and your neighbour, because it is the love of Christ Jesus that justifies and glorifies you.

Hi Rudy,

I very much enjoyed your article in the *Christian Courier* that tells of your experience at the SfN meeting and your desire for Christians to care and be involved in this important field. I have always had an interest in chemistry and, more recently, have been fascinated with neuroscience. Over the past several months I have read *A Science and Religion Primer*, edited by Heidi A. Campbell and Heather Looy, and *Neuroscience, Psychology, and Religion* by Malcolm Jeeves & Warren S. Brown (I read that one while on vacation, and my 16 year old daughter was a little worried I was losing it). My primary interest is in memory – its formation, retention, and, especially, its impact on present day living.

This interest arises out of my involvement in inner healing ministry. In this ministry some roots of present-day problems are thought to be linked to earlier experiences in life which are retained subconsciously and which may lead to faulty beliefs or lies about God, self, and others.

In inner healing ministry we ask Jesus to take the person to the memory that is at the root of the problem, understanding that it is more the conclusions drawn from the experience that affect the present. When these wrong conclusions are revealed, they are confessed, and we ask Jesus to replace them with his truth and to dismantle the faulty structures or patterns in life. This ministry is often very effective in helping people to walk on in truth and blessing.

We draw on writers who use general principles of psychology, for example, Brad Long & Cindy Strickler's in *Let Jesus Heal Your Hidden Wounds*. Ed Smith in his *Healing Life's Hurts Through Theophostic Prayer* makes brief reference to brain function. However I have not yet found any studies in neuroscience that help us grasp the significance of what is going on in the physical brain and non-physical mind, and neither these nor the books I recently read really broached this topic directly or with substantial basis in research. Do you know of any work in the field of neuroscience or psychology that deals with memory formation, retention, and impact that fits with this area of interest? I would be especially interested in what Christians in the field have written or are studying, but will consider other key works in this area of study. I would appreciate any assistance and pointing to resources you can offer.

Ray Vander Kooij
Pastor of Bethel CRC in
Acton, Ontario

Hi Ray,

Thank you for your comments. I have now come back from the SfN meeting in Chicago and can report that there were apparently 30,581 people at the meeting, and there were eight individuals at the event organized by the Christian Neuroscience Society. I know there was at least one more Christian at the SfN meeting, namely, the new director of NIH, Francis Collins (see my next column), who spoke to us about the research that NIH does. I know there were probably more Christians there but....

With respect to your questions about memory, you are falling into a large black hole between two traditions in psychology and the helping professions. On the one side are the therapists, who come from many backgrounds and who help people deal with issues like the ones you mention. On the other side are researchers who break memory down to little bits and specific processes and try to understand how it works. The column I did on HM speaks to some of this work. I know of little work that brings these two streams together (explicitly Christian or not) in a way that respects the things that each brings to the table. But I think you are right that "wrong memories" (my wording) may be at the heart of many issues that people struggle with. If they can be opened up to God's light in the way you suggest, healing may be possible.

The one area in which I have seen some interesting work done is dealing with post traumatic stress syndrome, with people who have had a major trauma, and now find that it becomes a memory that haunts them and prevents their normal functioning. Sometimes putting things away and draining the emotion from a memory is important.

Just one other comment: Heather Looy, who teaches at The King's University College in Edmonton was a student of mine.

Rudy Eikelboom
Professor and Chair of the Psychology Department at
Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo Ontario

Pro-life campus group wins big for free speech

In "Censored on Campus" (March 9, 2009 CC), we covered the University of Calgary students charged with trespassing by the school for setting up a controversial pro-life display. The trial was set for November; here's what happened:

John Carpay

Free speech scored a victory in early November when the Alberta Crown Prosecutors' Office stayed the trespassing charges which the University of Calgary had pressed against its own students. The Alberta Provincial Court trial was scheduled for Wednesday, Nov. 4. The university charged pro-life students with trespassing for having refused to comply with a university demand that they set up their Genocide Awareness Project signs in a circle facing inward, such that no passersby could see the signs.

The students stood their ground, pointing out that they were not in violation of any university rule, policy, bylaw or regulation. The students further noted that the university had no qualms about the display on campus of large colour photos showing the results of torture perpetrated by Chinese Communists on adherents of the Falun Gong religious movement. These gruesome torture photos were merely one example of myriad obscene, offensive, and disturbing expression on campus which the university tolerates in pursuing its declared mission: "to seek truth and disseminate knowledge."

The university claims to be a private institution, with the right to do whatever it wants to control its "private property." But this claim rings rather hollow, since more than 60 per cent of the university's funding comes from Alberta taxpayers. Further, the reason why the university receives this money from Albertans in the first place is because the university claims to be a forum for frank debate and the fearless pursuit of truth.

The students were willing to comply with "time, place and manner" restrictions that do not discriminate according to the content of speech.

Rules should apply equally to all, but the university singled out one view for censorship.

The Crown stays charges when it is in the public interest to do so, or when there is no reasonable prospect of obtaining a conviction. Nobody knows for sure what the outcome of the trial would have been, had it taken place on Wednesday Nov. 4 as scheduled. But the Crown's decision is good news for free speech.

John Carpay is Executive Director of the Canadian Constitution foundation, and one of the lawyers representing the U of C students in this case. The above excerpts were taken with permission from The Calgary Herald.

How tolerant would we be?

I want to thank Marian Van Til for her insightful report on Samuel Kobia's good-bye speech ("Outgoing WCC head blasts Israel, ignores Islamic persecution,' *CC* Sept. 14). I believe that Marian Van Til, in her typically astute manner, hit the nail right on the head when she pointed out that the WCC seems to "echo the bland bromides of European left-wing secularists."

And that really is the whole issue, is it not? Whether you believe that the church has replaced Israel (Replacement theology), or that God still has a plan for Israel as a nation (Dispensationalist theology), one thing no Bible-believing Christian would ever deny is that, ever since God created the nation of Israel, Satan has done everything in his power to destroy them. He always uses unbelievers or unbelieving nations to do it – secularists, if you will.

What concerns me in ever increasing measures (and it seems that it also concerns Marian Van Til) is that, more and more, the liberal/secular world (is there actually a measurable distinction?) blindly ignores mass atrocities perpetrated by fundamentalist, terrorist regimes, and, instead, focuses on the legitimate defence measures of the *only* true democracy in the Middle East.

It begs the question: If we in Canada, the States or even a European country were forced to defend all of our borders against an enemy that won't even acknowledge our presence, would we be as tolerant as Israel has been? I think not! In fact, in all likelihood we would declare martial law. Does anybody remember what we did to the Chinese, or what the USA did to the Japanese and the Germans who were within their borders?

Ryan James Gabourie
Innisfail, Alberta

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News

Christians igniting culture

Anita Brinkman

On October 23 and 24, ten speakers from across North America gathered at the Crossroads Centre in Burlington for the annual Ignite Our Culture conference. Under the theme of "Freedom and Family: Where Rights Meet Responsibilities," the speakers discussed some of the ways that fundamental freedoms are under threat in Canada, and how concerned citizens can stand against this threat. The conference was organized by a group called Equipping Christians for the Public Square (ECP), whose aims include educating and motivating Christians to engage the culture around us, and defending "the freedom for Christian thought, speech, and expression in Canada's public square."

Friday evening began with a session by popular media personality, Michael Coren. Other speakers included John Carpay, an Alberta lawyer with the Canadian Constitution Foundation; Mary Mackert, the former wife of a polygamous man; and Al Siebring, a politician, broadcaster, and writer.

Coren discussed the need for the media to be fair; they cannot be expected to confirm the biases and feelings of one group or another, but their coverage and their perspectives should be fair to all groups. According to Coren, we have come to the point where people are identified by what offends them, and this is beginning to lead to censorship of certain ideas and ways of thinking. He stressed the need for more Christians in journalism and for all Christians to pay attention to what is happening in the world of media and free speech.

Michael Coren stressed the need for more Christians in journalism.

Carpay focused on the definition of rights and freedoms, the importance of language in issues of law, and the need for Christians to be informed and involved. Discussing the radical change in our culture, and especially in our legal system, brought about by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, he pointed to the historic, fundamental rights of life, liberty, and property; while these primary rights of each person do not interfere with the primary rights of any other person, many of the rights listed in the Charter do. Many Canadians do not realize that the right to property was intentionally left out of the Charter. The Charter also gave judges new power in interpreting laws, even to the point of striking down laws they felt did not comply with the Charter. Discussing several cases of censorship, discrimination, and "rights," he illustrated the danger of this kind of power in the hands of unelected officials.

Stay informed, be involved

In a timely presentation, considering the recent case in Bountiful, British Columbia, Mary Mackert presented on the illegal, yet generally overlooked practice of polygamy, and the harm it inflicts on the women and children involved. She emphasized the need for Christians to stand against the legalization of polygamy, since such a ruling would necessarily change the definition of marriage and of family, which would have far-reaching consequences in the rest of society.

Al Siebring acted as the Master of Ceremonies, as well as hosting a discussion about media. Citing a well-known quote by Finley Peter Dunne, "The business of media is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable," Siebring asked, "Who are 'the afflicted'? Who is included in 'the comfortable'?" He suggested that this underlying credo of journalism may reveal the source of a lot of media bias against the status quo.

In several "question and answer" sessions, the speakers stressed the importance of staying informed, supporting politicians and media workers when they do the right thing, and engaging those around us in rational debate.

ECP representative Tim Bloedow, in an interview with *CC*, affirmed that continuing discussion, keeping the issues of freedom and rights in the public eye, is a major goal of ECP. Many of the speakers and several supporting organizations were represented at the conference by staff, displays, and book tables to provide conference attendees with literature and information. In addition, said Bloedow, "the ECP has recently decided to channel more energy into its website, NoApologies.ca." The site sports the subheading "Punching a hole in political correctness," and it includes articles which discuss trends in our culture; analyze rulings under debate in courts of law or in government offices; and cover protests, celebrations, and other events impacting Canada's culture. The site also gives access to interviews, audio-visual material, research, and columnists. In recent years, the ECP has hosted "a couple" of conferences a year, according to Bloedow, but he says this is about to change. In the future, he anticipates more conferences, but smaller, with fewer speakers and a professional appearance suitable for internet audiences as well as live ones.

For those wanting to take up the challenge and become more informed about trends in our culture, the noapologies.ca website is a helpful starting point. In its exchange of ideas, the site is an example of Voltaire's views as summarized by biographer Evelyn Beatrice Hall, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

Anita Brinkman is a part-time tutor and freelance writer from Chatham, Ontario. She is excited about the creative and surprising ways God uses his people.

Francis Collins
Faith and science, an object lesson

From the Lab
Rudy Eikelboom

On August 7, Dr. Francis Collins was unanimously approved by the United States Senate as the new director of the National Institute of Health (NIH), one of the world's largest research agencies, with a $30 billion budget. Collins is an American scientist who has been at the forefront of the genetic revolution. He (with others) discovered the gene for cystic fibrosis and was involved in finding the Huntington's disease gene. He headed the very large U.S. government project to sequence the human genome and did that on time and under budget. For all this work he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Bush.

Francis Collins is also a very public evangelical Christian. He says that he believes in theistic evolution and experienced a religious conversion at the age of 27. He wrote the bestselling 2006 book *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief* and founded the Templeton Foundation-funded organization BioLogos Foundation (www.biologos.org), which "emphasizes the compatibility of the Christian faith with scientific discoveries about the origins of the universe and life." In 2006 he defended the Christian faith in a debate on science and faith with the atheist Richard Dawkins (author of *The God Delusion*) that was published in *Time* magazine.

The juxtaposition of faith and science highlighted by Collins's nomination by Barack Obama and eventual appointment to the NIH was widely discussed in the American media, popular science press, and on the internet. As a fellow Christian scientist particularly interested in the relation of my faith to science, I find these discussions intriguing.

When one is choosing, as scientists do, what research questions to explore, it is possible to integrate one's faith position with one's research by asking questions that are within the bounds of faith. I can ask questions about addiction, using animal models, and fit that into my understanding of how sin has warped God's world. When one is a government official who is charged with applying the wishes of the state, the task can be much more difficult. How does one view and deal with ethical issues that may conflict with one's faith? How will Collins's beliefs affect his leadership of the NIH? Will he promote stem cell research that is based on human embryonic tissue? Will some of the best science suffer if it undercuts the core of his religious beliefs? On August 17, in his town hall meeting with NIH staff and the press, Dr. Collins said, "I don't want anyone at NIH or outside of NIH to think that I have a religious agenda in coming to this role. I will not."

Problem with separation

Dr. Collins's statement is consistent with the American Constitution, which, for good human reasons, having to do with the protection of individuals' freedom to choose their beliefs, says that religion and state should be kept as separate spheres. Faith is supposed to remain a private matter. But how does Collins's response square with his service of his and our Lord?

I have mixed feelings about this separation of church and state in government. If the American (or Canadian) constitution was changed to formally approve my Reformed faith, I would personally be happy, but if it approved and supported a Buddhist view, I would be less happy.

In 2 Kings 5:18, the Aramean army commander Naaman asks Elisha whether the Lord will pardon him when he goes into the temple of the idol god Rimmon with his master leaning on his arm. Elisha says, "Go in peace." I think this very brief incident in the Old Testament provides a model that Dr. Collins can use to work as an American public servant in this secular age. Like Esther, Naaman had to live in a culture that did not acknowledge the Kingship of Christ. It appears that under some circumstances our Lord permits us to work with or fit into this culture in a way that sometimes appears to be counter to service of our Lord. What defines the boundaries of this freedom is a challenge for us all as Christians.

The appointment of Dr. Collins as director of NIH provides evidence in a specific person that the realms of faith and science need not stay removed from each other. Dr. Collins will have to struggle with the demands of Caesar and God in a way that most of us do not experience. We must keep Dr. Collins and others like him in our prayers.

Rudy Eikelboom (reikelboom@wlu.ca) is associate professor of psychology at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario.

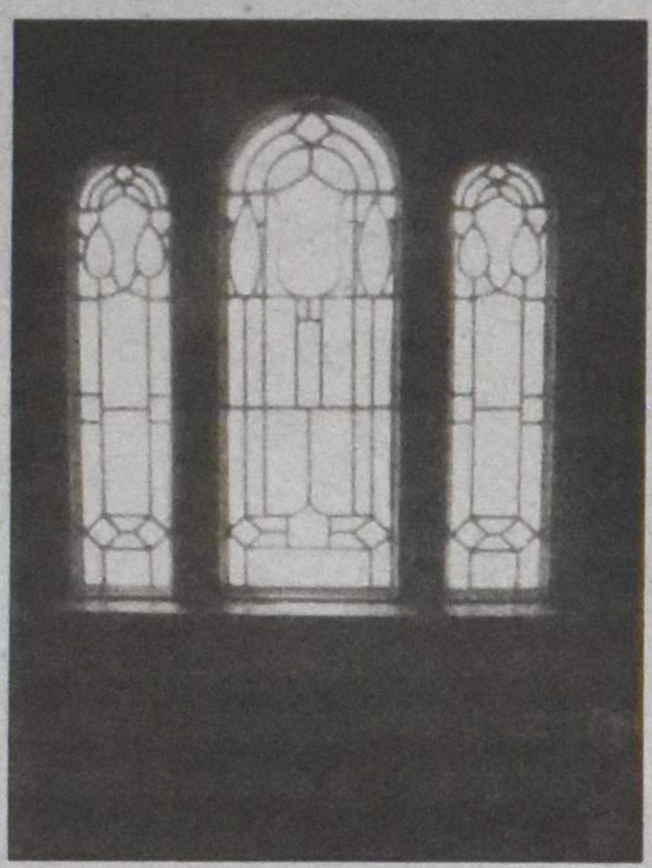
News

Drinking from the well: Sabbath rest for busy educators

Jane Hoogendam

"There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest (literally, a ceasing), a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to the Lord." (Lev. 23:3)

The theme of the Ontario Christian school teachers' convention, "Meet me at the well," was inspiring. Dr. Marva Dawn, an internationally known theologian, author and educator led us in the educational address, challenging teachers to welcome students into the joy of God's kingdom. Her workshop on Sabbath rest made me re-think my Sabbath-keeping. It applies to all people in every vocation.



North American society moves at a furious pace. Between work, children, volunteering and church, everyone has a full schedule. On top of this, some have aging parents to care for. When do we rest? Do we really keep the Sabbath? I know I am guilty of pulling out some marking or planning on the Sabbath to be prepared for Monday. Marva Dawn did a beautiful job of reinforcing that it is not about guilt, but freedom.

Dr. Dawn has kept a 24-hour Sabbath day rest for many years now. If you must work on Sundays, she suggests you choose another day to rest. Scriptures commands us to rest, for "the Sabbath is a sign between you and me that God frees us with grace."

"It says in Deuteronomy that you will surely be put to death and you will be cut off from your people" without this rest. Marva's explanation was that stress leads to death, and too much work limits our relationships in community.

Dr. Dawn's book, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*, is a fascinating read. She is convinced that if we focus on rest and beauty and worship on that one day, we will be more refreshed and focused on the other six days. She has experienced it!

I like that her approach is not a system of do's and don'ts. I grew up not being allowed to swim on Sunday, and I love swimming. She says anything you have to do is work, so don't do anything you have to or should do. Do fun things and plan different experiences. So yes, if you enjoy weeding the flower garden, then it can be a form of rest.

She emphasizes that change happens slowly. Talk about Sabbath-keeping with your family. Rest in the peace of the Lord. As Dr. Dawn says, "To celebrate the Sabbath is to rejoice in God's presence" (24). Let us come together, and drink at the well of living water!

Jane Hoogendam is a teacher and vice-principal at Knox Christian School in Bowmanville, Ont.

Suggestions for Sabbath-keeping:

Decide to end your work
Have a specific ending and beginning to your day of rest
Talk with your supportive friends (checking system)
Plan some new customs (plan Sabbath gifts)
Worship somehow
Family Activities: take turns (children too) choosing one special activity
Re-arrange the rest of the week
Know what is "work" for you
Don't worry if it is never perfect

Everybody's doing it

Flowers & Thistles
Curt Gesch

England has a famous Lake District. Minnesota is the Land of Ten Thousand Lakes. Wisconsin and Michigan aren't far behind. Ontario must leave them all in the lurch when it comes to having lakes. The whole Canadian Shield is composed of lakes – occasionally interrupted by rocky outcroppings, muskeg, and the sticks that locals call trees.

Even Central B.C. has an area known as the Lake District: you can find it by locating Burns Lake or Fraser Lake and looking for the blue patches on your map.

But now Quick, B.C.– which may not be on any map, Map quest, or in your *State Farm Road Atlas* – has a lake district. Specifically, Quick's Lake District is located on farmland near Cocks and Morden Roads.

It all started with glaciers, I guess. All sorts of small depressions were left by melting ice. These often become visible when the land is cleared and the hay mower has to take a curvaceous route around these small (usually 10 metre-diameter) depressions. Over time, bigger equipment meant that these small temporary ponds were filled in. Straight rows triumphed. Frogs, toads, and duck populations lost habitat.

Starting several years ago, however, bulldozers and excavators began restoring ponds and wetlands in this area. Maybe the first dugout was one inherited by John Wisselink. It has long been a haven for migrating waterfowl. Several years ago, neighbour Rick Boonstra – with a bulldozer, excavator and time on his hands – made a series of ponds on his farm. One of them, in particular, has become a sort of staging ground for locally-hatched Canada geese in this area. (Goose hunters largely leave it alone as a sort of mini-sanctuary.) Betsey and I asked another neighbour, Rayner Oosterhoff, to dig us a pond about 100 metres from our house.

The next major pond-maker was Geoff Hutchinson, who has a horse-boarding business and sometimes grazes beef cattle on his quarter section just up the road. I often joke that Eskerhazy Farm (the one my wife and I own) contains the only swamp in the area that Geoff hasn't cleared, drained, or otherwise mutilated with his heavy machinery.

That, of course, is unfair to Geoff. In turning his farm into a grazing area he has created five dugouts so far and has plans for several more. Each paddock has its own water hole.

But it was this summer – 2009 – that living on Cocks and Morden Roads meant keeping up with the Hutchinsons in creating ponds. Betsey and I contracted with Geoff's D-8 Caterpillar and Rick Boonstra's excavator to dig two new dugouts. Bill and Jane Smith added two ponds to their quarter section. Chris and Les Yates put an amphitheatre-shaped pond in their "front yard." Steffen and Andrea Meyer put a large earth-bermed dugout in their sloping pasture-field. And the Tabert family has sponsored several huge dugouts, one of which I term "The Hydroelectric Pond."

*****

The creation of this mini-lake-district did not happen by any sort of master plan, by a co-ordinated agricultural program, by Ducks Unlimited, or any other organization. The people on each farm seems to act independently of one another, but they certainly noticed a trend developing.

We would see each other on the road and scratch our head and say, "Did you hear that Bill is getting a big dugout?" Bill would say, "We're like a bunch of Saskatchewan farmers on this road." "Did you hear that Fred is having a *huge* pond made across from his house?" Steffen ponders aloud: "Maybe next year I'll get another pond made in this part of the field."

*****

No federal, provincial or regional grants were given out for all this excavation. The Quick Lake District creation has been a private project from the word "Go." For some farmers it is a matter of supplying grazing animals with various watering sites. For some it is a matter of having a supplementary or emergency water supply that can be gravity fed to a barn or field. One of the ponds may be used for small-scale irrigation. Several of us have been influenced by the work of Sepp Holzer who has more than 70 ponds on his Austrian farm.

Some dream of a private fishing hole. Or a duck refuge. Or a place to hunt ducks. Some are fencing livestock out of the ponds so that a rich litoral zone can develop complex ecosystems and increase biodiversity.

But all of us realize one thing: in our area, water means life. We have long winters, but not very much actual annual precipitation. We fill our ponds with snow-melt; this may help stabilize our water table, but even if it didn't, somehow or other, we're all interested in ponds, in water.

By chance, by happenstance, by peer pressure, a small region of ponds and dugouts is being developed in Quick, B.C. Whatever the reason, the filled-in hayfield puddles are compensated-for, the wildlife and domestic stock will benefit and, I suspect, the Creator is smiling.

Curt Gesch (curtgesch@hotmail.com) is a retired teacher who has a root cellar, a garden chalet, and a really old house in Quick, B.C.

Planned Parenthood director witnesses abortion and resigns

BRYAN, Texas (Christian Post) – The director of a Planned Parenthood abortion center in Texas has resigned and embraced the pro-life movement after witnessing an abortion through an ultrasound. Abby Johnson had worked at the clinic in Bryan/College Station, Texas, for eight years before departing from the facility after her change of heart.

"I left on good terms and simply had a change of heart on this issue," she told 40 Days for Life, which has been holding prayer and fasting initiatives outside her clinic since fall of 2004. "Over the past few months I had seen a change in motivation regarding the financial impact of abortions and really reached my breaking point after witnessing a particular kind of abortion on an ultrasound."

According to reports, Johnson had never seen an abortion take place on an ultrasound but happened to be present during one procedure, in which she saw a 13-week-old fetus trying to move away from the doctor's probe. "I just thought, 'What am I doing?'" she told ABC News. "And then I thought, 'Never again.'" Two weeks later, she quit.

Testament to the power of prayer

"It's truly been a testament to the power of prayer and the courage of Abby to leave a job she felt she could no longer do in good conscience," commented Shawn Carney, the director of the Coalition for Life and a 40 Days for Life board member. "It has been a joy for all of our volunteers who have prayed outside of the clinic for the conversion of the clinic workers to witness that conversion actually happens."

According to 40 Days for Life, Johnson is one of eight abortion industry workers who left their jobs during the fifth coordinated 40 Days for Life campaign that concluded recently in 212 cities. Johnson was the highest-ranking of the eight, the campaign reported. Others who quit their clinic jobs included nurses, office staffers and security personnel.

In the wake of Johnson's departure, Planned Parenthood has gone to court to seek a restraining order against both Johnson and the Coalition for Life, the local group that originated 40 Days for Life and continued regular prayer vigils in front of the clinic for the past five years.

Planned Parenthood filed the "restraining order of disclosure" against Johnson reportedly because of fears she may have taken confidential files out of the organization. Johnson, however, has denied those allegations. A court hearing on the order is scheduled to take place after this writing.

Coalition for Life director Carney has been working with Johnson since she left her job last month.

Abby Johnson with Shawn Carney, U.S. National Campaign Director of 40 Days for Life, whose group prays outside the clinic Johnson directed.

Experts believe election disproves same sex marriage support

AUGUSTA, Maine (CNA) – Maggie Gallagher, president of the National Organization for Marriage, spoke to CNA about the victory of "Question 1" in Maine on the Nov. 3 election day in the U.S. The question repeals previous legislation legalizing "gay marriage." Gallagher called the victory "very heartening to marriage supporters and disappointing to gay 'marriage' advocates." The result defied statistics and expectations.

Noting that the supporters of same-sex marriage were surprised and upset, Gallagher analyzed the pre-election circumstances. "The gay marriage advocates had a three-year head start. They put millions into building an extensive grassroots organization. Maine was a socially liberal state … and they have the entire political establishment on their side."

Also important was the experience and information gathered from the failure of Proposition 8 in California on the same issue. "They ran the kind of ads that the critics said would have won in California," Gallagher noted. But the voters in Maine rejected the proposition by an even larger margin than they had in California. Question 1, an initiative which overturned the Maine legislature's decision to recognize homosexual couples as married, passed by a margin of 52.9 to 47.1 percent.

Those results represent "a change in the social narrative they were trying to create," says Gallagher. Despite all the preparation, the extra time and the huge financial advantage proponents had, "the American people have made it known that they aren't on board with this gay 'marriage' thing," she concluded. Thirty-one of the 50 American states have now allowed a popular vote on gay marriage, in many cases after federal courts in those states have allowed it. The measure has been rejected in all 31 of those states.

Scholar tracks major church patterns

Marian Van Til, *with files from Providence College*

OTTERBURNE, Man. – "Something is happening out there: traditional churches are declining in membership and influence in society. New churches are scrapping plans for traditional buildings in order to meet in movie theaters, living rooms and coffee shops. Christians are becoming more and more interested in churches that offer ancient rituals and litanies. Young people are demanding that their churches take leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDs, poverty and climate change. Denominational boundaries are breaking down as Christians across the theological spectrum look for common ground. What's going on?"

What's happening is as old as religion itself, Phyllis Tickle told a Reformation Day audience at Booth College in Winnipeg. Tickle spoke at a day-long conference sponsored by a group of 18 Christian colleges and seminaries, publications and churches.

Tickle was the founding editor of the religion department at Publishers Weekly and is the author of the book The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why. In it, she examines how the history of the church affects the "new face of the church." And that's what she also conveyed to her October 31 audience.

What emerges, she said, "is a pattern of upheaval every 500 years in which the church cleans out what is old and ill-fitting so it can be relevant to the culture at large."

She concluded, "These upheavals – the last was the Protestant Reformation – can be thought of as 'rummage sales'" during which "the very structures and institutions of the church are shaken out and re-examined." The result is a "'Great Emergence,' a shattering of the old structures of institutionalized Christianity and the birth of new and vital forms of Christianity."

English rabbi says faith affects family size

LONDON (Catholic Culture) – England's leading rabbi, Lord Sacks, has argued that Europe is suffering a demographic crisis because couples who lack religious faith are unwilling to make the sacrifices associated with parenthood.

Lord Sacks has asserted more than once that Europe is the only thoroughly secular continent on the planet and the only one that "dying out." He accuses Europe's citizens of not being prepared for parenthood's sacrifices of money, attention, time and emotional energy.

The 61-year-old English lord and rabbi, who took his seat in the House of Lords only last week, said in a lecture earlier this month at the Christian think-tank Theos, "Wherever you turn today - Jewish, Christian or Muslim - the more religious the community, the larger on average are their families."

Sacks went on to say that "the major assault on religion today comes from the neo-Darwinians." One of those is the famous atheist Richard Dawkins, whose bestseller *The God Delusion* argues that the rise of "religious fundamentalism" has divided people around the world.

Lord Sacks asked rhetorically, "In [modern Europe]... where will you find space for the concept of sacrifice for the sake of generations not born? We are undergoing the moral equivalent of climate change and no one is talking about it."

The chief rabbi was knighted in 2005 for services to the community and interfaith relations. He has been chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth for 18 years.

Human trafficking fears around World Cup

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (Catholic Culture) – Warning that "South Africa has become a sort of 'hub' for trafficking in human persons," Father Chris Townsend, spokesperson for that nation's Catholic bishops, is predicting a "sharp increase in trafficking of women forced to be prostituted" for the World Cup, which will be held in ten South African cities next June and July.

"Criminal organizations throughout the world, from Nigeria, Italy, Lebanon, China, all send thousands of women to be used as prostitutes in our country, while others are sent from South Africa to Europe and the Persian Gulf, for the same purpose," said Father Townsend. "Thousands of women from all over the world are arriving – not only from other African nations, but from Asian and European nations as well."

In response, the South African bishops have launched a campaign to help South African Christians identify victims of human trafficking and "help them to emerge from the nightmare that they have been thrown into by criminals."

News

'Grow up!' those offended by Penn State T-shirt 'cross' told

Marian Van Til, with files from Christian Post

PHILADELPHIA, Penn. (Christian Post) – A T-shirt design that was intended to foster school spirit on the campus of Penn State University has stirred up unintended controversy.

It is an annual tradition at the university for students to don white clothing, including a special T-shirt, for a designated football game. Students then fill their 107,282-seat stadium to capacity, "whiting out" supporters of the opposing team.

The design by student Emily Sabolsky was selected by her fellow students out of two dozen entries. It features a white T-shirt on which a wide, vertical dark-blue stripe is intersected by the horizontal words "Penn State." Even while 30,000 T-shirts were sold on the 43,000-student main campus in Philadelphia, six students complained that the design looks like a cross. They filed complaints with the university and even went to the Anti-Defamation League, which contacted Penn State officials. That ignited the hullabaloo. Even the Fox News network picked up the story.

A huge majority of students who weighed in on the issue were either supportive or indifferent of the shirt design, including university President Hillel, who told the student-run *Collegian* newspaper that her group of Jewish students was not going to complain.

Most students found the issue laughable. "I don't know a single person, Jewish, Christian, atheist, or anything, who objected to this shirt on religious or moral principles, or who took offense to it," a student blogger wrote. "Honestly, I think it's basically people just trying to stir up controversy over something that's ridiculous," he added.

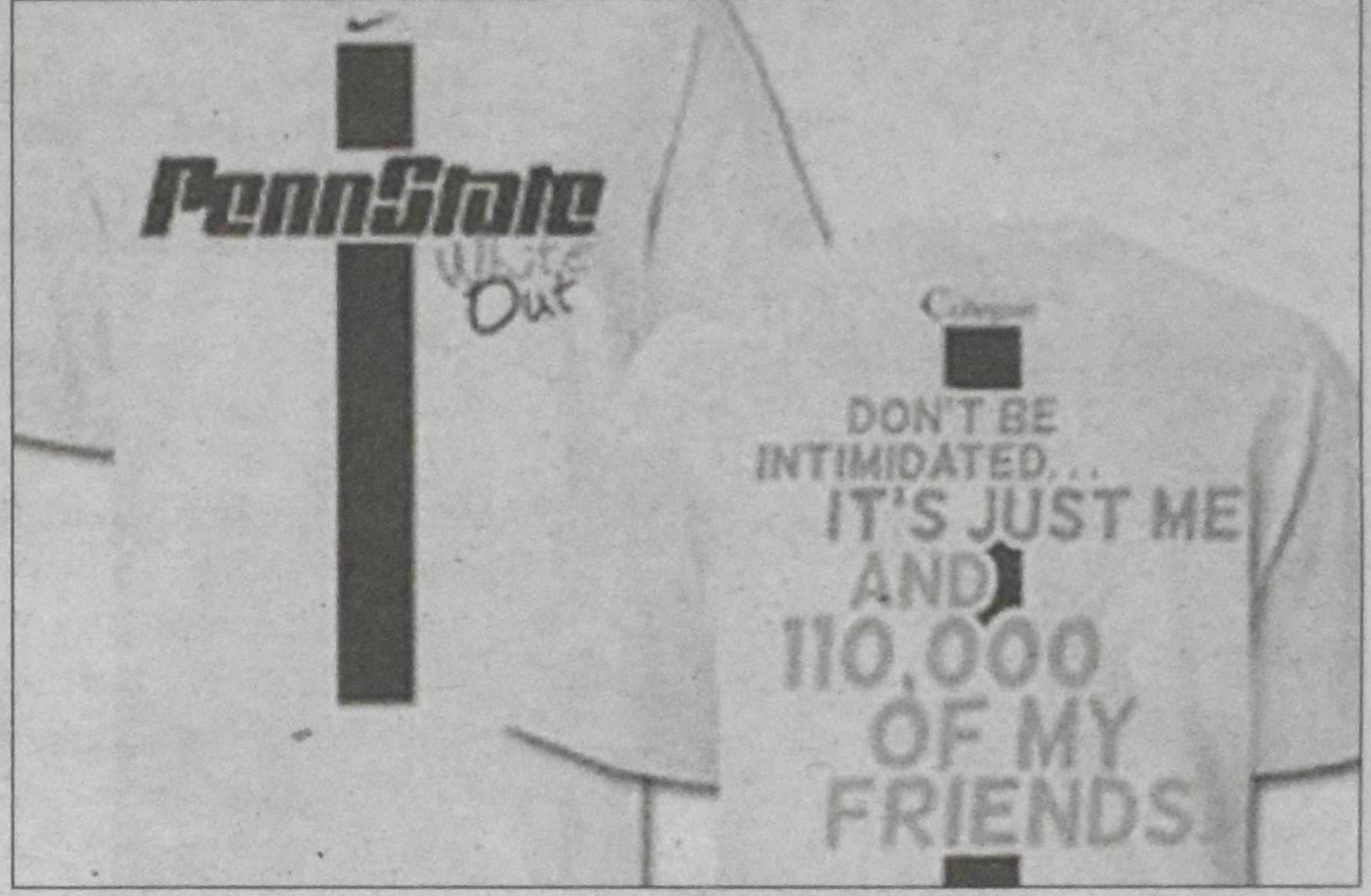
Current student Nick Mangus, noted, meanwhile, that one of the reasons why he left his home state of Virginia was "to distance myself from sheer amount of politically-correct shenanigans."

The *Collegian* printed letters on the issue. "While driving through Centre County, I saw power poles shaped like crosses. Advice to Allegheny Power: You'd better change your design before someone is offended," wrote Penn State alumnus David Dimmick.

Recent graduate Steve Edling suggested sarcastically that it was time to protest that all lowercase t's be immediately stricken from campus as well. "From this day forth, the words 'Penn State' shall be in all caps or never written at all, because crosses belong at [Catholic] Notre Dame and nowhere else," he wrote. Edling spoke for nearly all of his fellow students when he summed up, "Seriously, grow up! Quit making yourselves look like loud-mouthed extremists."

Penn State's Beaver Stadium is largest in North America and the third largest in the world. The university has 24 campuses throughout Pennsylvania with a combined student body of 84,000 and an alumni association of nearly 150,000 members.

On the less controversial side of this year's "White Out" T-shirt, visiting football fans are given this tongue-in-cheek advise, "Don't be intimidated ... It's just me and 110,000 of my friends."



Christian higher educators look for students at CCU fairs

Marian Van Til, *with files from CHEC*

STEINBACH, Man. – Every fall, a group of 17 Christian academic institutions participate in a Christian Colleges and Universities (CCU) Fair across Canada. The fair is sponsored by the 35 members that make up CHEC, Christian Higher Education Canada.

Based in Steinbach, Manitoba, CHEC is a non-profit association of higher education institutions. Its mission is to "advance the efficiency and effectiveness of Christian higher education at member schools, including fostering institutional cooperation, and to raise public awareness of the value of Christian higher education in Canada."

This year's CCU Fair in the West was cancelled, but the Ontario fair lasted from Nov. 4-11, moving from city to city, including Toronto, Barrie, Belleville, Ottawa, Ancaster, Waterloo, Woodstock and London.

Christian Reformed supporters of higher education were involved in both offering their elementary and secondary schools as meeting places, and in that Reformed academic institutions like Redeemer University College in Ancaster and the Institute for Christian Studies in Toronto participate in the fair. Fair meetings were held at Timothy Christian School in Barrie, at Hamilton District Christian High School in Ancaster and Quinte Christian School in Belleville. The King's University College in Edmonton is also a CHEC member.

The fairs are designed to present information to potential students about what CHEC institutions have to offer, helping (primarily) high school students make a decision about what post-secondary school to attend.

The Christian Higher Education website (checusout.ca/index_html) also allows those looking for a post-secondary Christian education to search member institutions by name or province, to look up the subjects and major areas of study each offers, to get information about financial aid, and to read foundational material about the importance of Christian higher education.

Event honours student

Soccer tournament convenes Grade 6 students from Niagara Christian schools

Jennifer Higgs, Axiom News Service

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. – A recent Niagara District Christian Schools soccer tournament commemorated a former student while promoting inclusion and a fun time for 140 Grade 6 pupils who participated.

This is the second annual soccer tournament that Beacon Christian Schools elementary school has hosted in partnership with Mike's Miracles. Mike VandenDool attended the St. Catharines elementary school and passed away in 2008 after a battle with cancer when he was in Grade 6.

"He was the kind of kid who went out of his way to include other people and he also loved soccer, so we thought that was a nice tie-in to run this tournament," says event organizer Ralph Pot, who is also the school's vice-principal and Grade 7 teacher.

The participating schools included six in Ontario's Niagara region: Beacon Christian School, Covenant Christian School in Smithville, John Knox Christian School in Fruitland, Dunnville Christian School, Jarvis District Christian School and Calvin Christian School in Hamilton.

Any Grade 6 student from these schools was welcome to participate in the Oct. 8 event. Eight multi-school teams were formed, with each team receiving their own colour T-shirt. One staff member or coach from each school led one of the teams.

Everybody gets a chance

Beacon has three mini soccer fields behind the school, on which the students played a total of four games. "Everyone gets a chance to play, everyone gets a chance to win and it has been quite successful," says Ralph Pot.

Mike's Miracles

"Strong Together"

The first half hour of the day the students got to know one another, then they played three games of soccer before breaking for lunch. After lunch Brian VandenDool, Mike's father, gave a presentation to the participants about Mike and his vision for helping others. "That was a pretty moving service," Pot said.

Mike's aim was to make a difference in the lives of other children who were sick or on their own cancer journey, and [in the lives of] their families. While on his own cancer journey, Mike appreciated the kindness of others in his community and wanted to make the road easier for other children.

Mike's Miracles donates its funds to organizations such as McMaster University Children's Hospital, McMaster "Child Life," Camp Trillium, Help a Child Smile, Rankin Cancer Run, Give Kids the World and Ronald McDonald House. Proceeds from food and snacks for sale during the event went towards Mike's Miracles.

The theme for the day and the team cheer is the same theme as Mike's Miracles – "Strong together." "It's about participation and about giving every kid a chance to participate, and also a chance for students to meet students from other schools," says Pot.

Pot says while he is not sure what changes may happen to the event in future years. Other schools that are not affiliated with the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS) have expressed interest in participating.

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Profile

RE-create Outreach Art Studio

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

Brouwer

Betty Brouwer, 44, Artistic Director of RE-create Outreach Art Studio, has been working in different capacities with street-involved youth since 2001. Recently *Christian Courier* interviewed Brouwer to learn more about RE-create and its impact on street-involved youth.

What is RE-create Outreach Art Studio?

RE-create is an open art studio that has operated in downtown Hamilton, Ontario, for more than six years, connecting street-involved youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-nine with local artists through a variety of creative projects. It's a nonjudgmental place where youth can begin to reconnect to themselves, others and their community through the creative arts while gaining valuable life skills.

At RE-create, we believe that the act of creating is not only a form of self-expression but also provides the potential for imagining new possibilities. The creative process helps youth to define and identify how they presently participate in creating their life conditions and points to options they could choose instead. The artwork created serves as a concrete testament to the external community of the abilities and lives of the persons who have created them. Art provides a "voice" for the youth to express themselves and to share their hopes, frustrations and fears.

How did God lead you to your position as Artistic Director of RE-create?

Actually, God led me through a process by which I started up RE-create. I am trained as an art therapist and work mainly with children and young people. From 2001-2003, I ran an Expressive Arts program for The Living Rock, a downtown Hamilton outreach ministry for street-involved youth. I was familiar with Sketch, a working art studio in Toronto. I thought that if there was a Sketch in Hamilton, I would like to work there. Someone said to me, "Why don't you start one, or something like it?" Things grew from there. People believed in the idea and came alongside me. A working group was formed, and RE-create eventually came into existence.

Do you collaborate with other organizations to accomplish your goals?

Yes, it's all about collaboration. Hamilton is unique in some ways, as the agencies serving our street-involved youth work together to ensure the best possible services for them.

RE-create has partnered with local artists who have come in and shared their expertise and knowledge with the youth. As well, it has partnered with other agencies, such as The Print Studio, Notre Dame School House, The Living Rock Ministries (for their Arts of August event), the Hamilton Police's Graffiti Prevention Strategy Team, Christ Church Cathedral, and Mission Services with their Project Empower Program.

Describe some of the projects the youth have undertaken.

In 2006, through RE-create and the Hamilton Police and its Graffiti Prevention Strategy Team (GPST), youth were involved in a great community project to create a graffiti mural. The mural was collaboratively produced in Hamilton's Beasley Park. It's still displayed there. In 2007, RE-create again teamed up with the GPST and held a community Spray-off event, and also created another mural for a park in downtown Hamilton. These projects enabled the youth to contribute and give back with their creativity in a legally-sanctioned activity. In 2008, RE-create again offered a graffiti time.

In 2005 and 2006, RE-create participated in Design Hope, a project run by a Dundas architectural firm, Vermeulen/Hind, to raise awareness of, and funds to address, homelessness in order to benefit Hamilton's Out-of-the-Cold program. Different artists and architects are invited each year to submit an art piece that reflects the theme of "home" or "shelter." The artwork was auctioned off to help support Out of the Cold.

RE-create has started a fundraiser selling Christmas cards made by the youth with the funds going back into creative art endeavours for the youth.

In 2007, RE-create partnered with the Central Public Library and participated in the One Book, One City program creating artwork based on the book, *Looking for X*. This project culminated with a public display and exhibition at Hamilton Central Public Library. In 2009, RE-create partnered with Notre Dame House School and Central Public Library in the One City, Many Stories program.

This summary tells of some of the activities that RE-create has been engaged in. But woven into the fabric of these activities is the lives of the youth who utilized RE-create, the relationships that have begun, and the stories that are shared. At the most basic level, RE-create empowers the youth participants by unconditionally accepting them and by believing that they are people who are of worth and treating them as such. It's exciting to see the youth when they are impressed and amazed at their work hanging on a gallery wall. It's neat to see the sense of validation they experience when others give them positive feedback on their work. The youth become empowered through the act of creating. They begin to realize that they are able to make choices, to imagine possibilities, and to affect change within their lives.

The Beasley Park mural

How have youth been challenged and changed through their involvement with Re-create?

Mouse is a youth whom I have had the privilege of knowing for the last five years. He initially came as a youth to RE-create and made artwork and now works for RE-create during studio times. I value our relationship immensely.

About his past and the impact RE-create has had on him, Mouse says, "I was dealing with homelessness for about ten years doing whatever. Then I found RE-create – a place that I could use to grow, build and change myself. Over the last six years, I've still been on and off the streets, but I'm much different now. I'm working for RE-create to help others that aren't far behind me and how I was. We've had youth in who had family problems. They just needed an outlet and someone with an open ear and kind heart to talk with them. That is what RE-create is able to do for people. After starting at RE-create, I went back to school, learned to get along with people I don't know from a hole in the wall. I've learned leadership skills that had needed improving, and to look at the whole world as a big art store. Anything can be turned into artwork is what I think the biggest impact RE-create has made on me – being able to see art in everything.

How has your work at RE-create had an impact on you?

I'm struck by the generosity of the youth. Sometimes when they've received money from the sale of their artwork, they give it back to RE-create. I value the people I've met, and I realize that we are similar. I recall one photo show, "24 hours: My life, my experience, my neighbourhood." Participants had to shoot a roll of film in a 24-hour period to reflect their lives, experiences and neighbourhoods. The photos were about people, kids who were important to the youth – no different from what you or I would see as important and part of our lives.

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema is a freelance writer living in St. Catharines, ON. She has recently published her first children's picture book, Monzi and Mama's Stories, copies of which can be ordered at sonyavf55@hotmail.com.

RE-create Outreach Art Studio Christmas Cards

Consider purchasing your Christmas cards from RE-create this year. The artwork for these cards was made by street-involved youth. All proceeds from the sale of cards will go back to the studio to support the youth in creative programs and other artistic pursuits. For more information call Betty at 1-866-347-0041 or visit www.re-create.ca.

Bienke's story (part X)

This is the last part of the life of Jacobina Wilhelmina Radsma, née Vlaar, as told to her daughter Marion.

We lived on Simpson Road for three years but desperately wanted to buy our own home. We had looked at a number of places, but somehow they never seemed affordable. Which only goes to prove once again the Providence of God – because he was saving something much better for us. We had almost given up when we found a reasonably priced lot on Meadowvale Drive, a service road along the Queen Elizabeth Way. We bought it immediately. The vendor was a builder who treated his clients fairly and constructed his homes solidly. We contracted out to him the construction of our very own dream house. It was very exciting.

Adam and I had never imagined in our early years that we would ever be able to have our own home, especially a home built brand new for us – to our choice, our taste, our needs. The garden which we designed ourselves gave us great pleasure; we developed the deeply-rutted mud lot into a beautiful and bountiful retreat. We planted a hundred trees and shrubs, including red maple, green maple, mountain ash, flowering Japanese cherries and crab apple trees with three different colours of blossom. Our vegetable garden kept us supplied all summer. All our children grew up there and left to face adult joys and responsibilities from this home.

After we moved into our new home, we continued the tradition we had started in our former home; we always had foster children, usually two or three at a time. At one point, we simultaneously had four babies under nine months old. And that's how our youngest came to be part of our family. She was only five days old when she came to us straight from the hospital and we couldn't bear to part with her. We called her Brenda Jennifer, in honour of my sister Brechtje and my second oldest brother Jan. Brenda was Adam's Father's Day present – he couldn't have received anything that would have equaled the joy this beautiful child provided.

Opa

Now we had seven children in the permanent household as well as three adults since Opa Radsma was still very much a part of the family. In addition, we normally had from four to six foster children staying with us. Sometimes we had fourteen or fifteen people sitting around the dinner table. The house was always full and active, but we loved it – and the many children. It was exciting for Marion but sad for me in many ways when she left to attend Calvin College in the United States in 1967 – much too far away for my liking!

When Marion was 19, and already away at college, Opa Radsma, who had been living in the St. Catharines sanatorium for a year, died of lung cancer. After 17 years in

the family, watching it as it grew, experiencing its many changes, he was woven into the fabric of our family. Everybody loved Opa Radsma deeply. We all missed him.

At about the same time that our house was being completed, Adam accepted a new position with Sears Canada. This company had just opened a brand new retail department store in St. Catharines and had advertised for delivery truck drivers. Adam, who was finding his long hours and relentless route-building efforts as a milkman somewhat exhausting, was fortunate enough to win one of these positions. For years he would say that he felt as though he were on vacation working for Sears. He loved the work there and the consideration with which he was treated. When he became sick with cancer, the company and his co-workers supported him throughout his long illness.

Cancer invades

Adam had already experienced his first bout with cancer when I stopped fostering and started a whole new career in nursing. I was 50 years old (or young, whichever way you look at it) and could finally act on an ambition I have had for as long as I can remember. I dreamed of being a nurse. As a young girl, it was not possible for me; we had to go to work as soon as possible after our school days were finished because my family needed the money I could contribute. I had to wait 35 years, but God rewarded my patience and fulfilled my wish. When I started as a health care aide in the Linhaven geriatric care facility, I was given part-time hours; that was very hectic because they could and would call at all times during the evenings for last-minute help. After two years I asked for and received full-time days. I loved my job and stayed until my retirement at 65. Sometimes I still miss it. But then, I also still miss the babies I cared for.

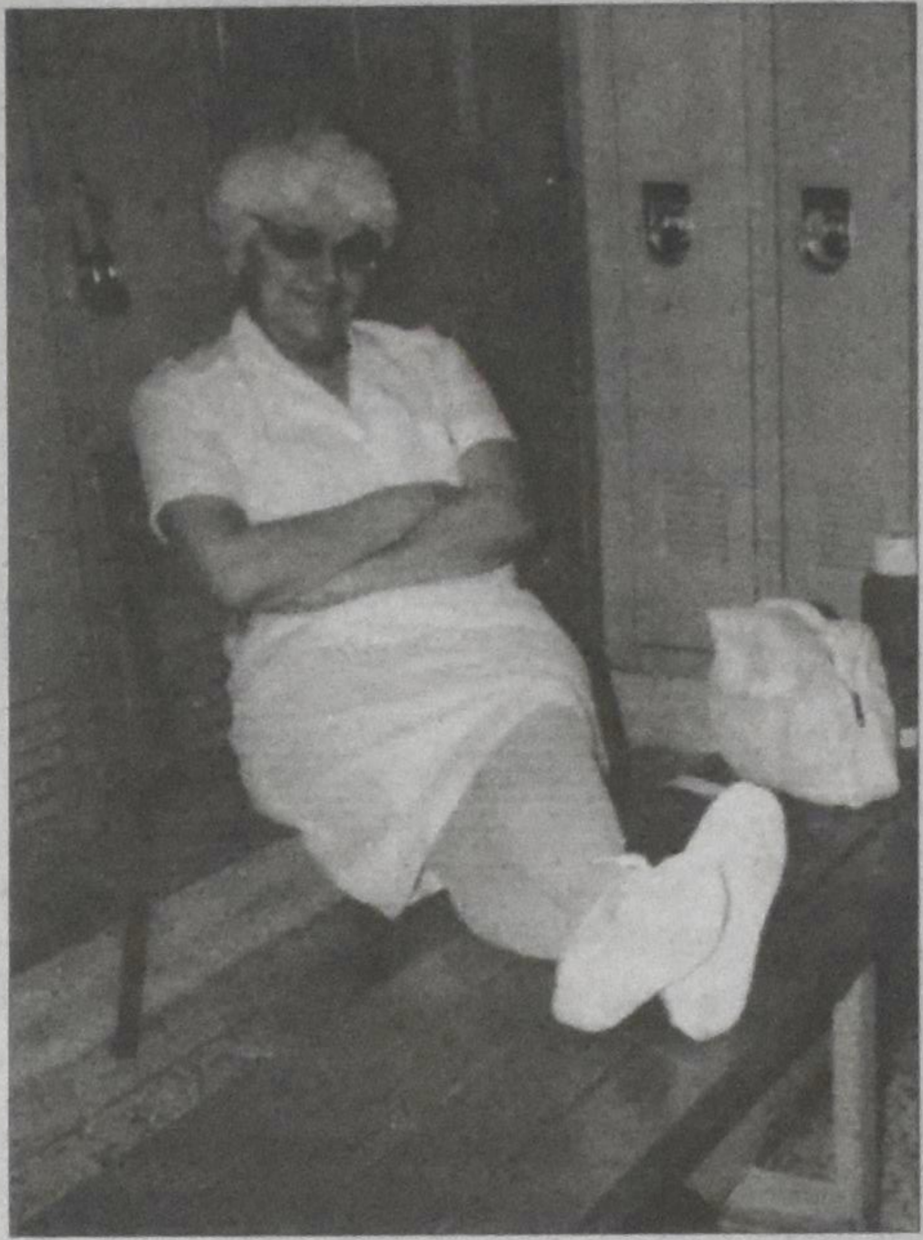
I lived at 49 Meadowvale Drive for another five or six years after my husband died. Then I sold the house; it had been barely large enough to hold all of us when we first built it, but now it was much too large for me. When our home was sold, I moved to Tabitha Homes, where I still live. My cosy little apartment is just around the corner from the Meadowvale home that saw so much laughter and love, and even closer to the church that anchors my life to this day.

On my 57th birthday, Adam gave me my first diamond ring. The next month he died. He died in 1979 when he was 56 years old, leaving a huge hole in my life. After 31 years of marriage, I was on my own again. I took his wedding ring and put it on under my own, a constant reminder of the ongoing cycle of love. I missed Adam a lot but life was busy with three teenagers still at home and a full time job. Work was the best therapy. I miss Adam even more now that I am retired and living quietly alone.

Together time

Even when we first came to Canada, Adam and I kept our relationship new by spending weekends together away from the family. Later, when he had two weeks of vacation every year, we would spend one week on vacation with the children at a summer cottage. We would take the second week as time for just the two of us. We would travel as our mood took us – north into Ontario resort country, or out west, or down east. As the children grew older, we started taking out season subscriptions to cultural productions during the winter. For two seasons, we had tickets to Hamilton Place, for another two or three years we subscribed to the winter program at the Shaw Festival Theatre. For several years after Adam passed away, some of the children would present me with season's tickets for two so that I could continue to attend shows with a guest. Although I enjoyed these very much, it was not the same thing as sitting in a darkened theatre holding hands with my husband and even in the theatre I would sometimes miss him.

Adam and I had almost 32 years together. They were good years, loving years. He and his father held me in high regard and always treated me with respect. Both of them tried their hardest to spoil me completely. Opa would bring me tea in bed every morning while he was alive; Adam continued the tradition after his father was gone. Every Sunday, Adam and Opa would extend this treat to the entire family, first playing



sacred music on the stereo high-fidelity record player, so loudly that the whole house would resound with the sound; then they would bring tea – served with a side of tea biscuits for dipping – to all the slug-a-beds still trying to sleep. Even the little ones would have tea although they would often get out of bed to have their tea with Opa by the kitchen table.

Retirement

I was not able to travel much for the first twenty-five years after we emigrated. Then Adam and I were able for the first time to return to the land of our childhood. My second trip to Holland came much faster, but was also not as happy since this trip came soon after he died. I went back alone, a present from my children. After that, I was fortunate to be able to visit some Caribbean resorts. I also revisited Holland twice more, this time in the company of my brother Joe, who had immigrated with us so many years earlier. He was also alone; his wife Jannie had died two years before our first trip from arthritis and cancer. Not only did we visit our family in Europe together, but until he remarried a few years ago we also spent every Saturday together starting with breakfast and finishing after dinner. What wonderful times we had! When I look back over the years I marvel at what I have seen and done. I have been very busy all the time. Never a dull moment!

We lived our lives to the fullest. The Lord was so good to us while Adam was with me. He blessed me through Adam and later when I was alone His goodness did not stop. I have been marvellously blessed in my children and grandchildren, my family and my friends.

There are so many faces in my life. It has been rich, filled with gifts from God. I am ready when the Lord calls me home. But until then, I like the life I am living.

Thank you, Father.

Introspection

Getting Unstuck Arlene Van Hove

WHEN A STORM IS BREWING…

As I am writing this column I am wearing a bright colored red scarf. I am glad it is blustery, raining and cold outside so it seems to go with the season. The scarf feels nice, warm and safe.

Still, one of my grandchildren did not hesitate to ask me this afternoon "why are you wearing a red woolen scarf in the house Oma?"

"To stop me from *saying* something I should not say, " I answer.

"What is it you want to say but shouldn't, Oma?" She asks with a frown on her face.

"Nothing I want to talk about right now, honey, but it is also there to stop me from *doing* something I should not do." I explain.

"What is you want to do but shouldn't, Oma?" she persists.

"Nothing I want to talk about right now, honey," I again tell her with a chuckle as I groan inwardly.

"Oh?" she says with a puzzled frown on her face, and before she gathers her thoughts to ask another question, I suggest we play her favorite board activity, "Let's have a game of scrabble."

Years ago I used to feel uncomfortable whenever I experienced strong emotions especially anger. Needless to say, I sometimes got myself into situations I later regretted. Now, most of the time, I am able to remain silent when there is a storm brewing inside me and give myself time to get a grip on what is going on. Over time I learned being able to regulate my emotions is really about personal power.

Feeling good, feeling bad

But my quest began by asking: why is it important to regulate our emotions? The answer is simple: when emotions or feelings are doing their work, they protect us, inform our decisions, connect us with others, and give our lives richness and texture. When we can "regulate" our emotions various feelings blend well together, and we can stay within a comfortable margin of stimulation. In other words, we feel good. When emotions are not regulated, they produce various degrees of distress, confusion, and erratic behavior and we do not feel good.

Zoom out!

Having said all this, there are two things we need to know if we want to manage our emotions. The first is distance. This skill is a bit like "zooming out" from a visual image with a telephoto lens. When we focus on an object, its qualities and presence dominate our view. But if we zoom out to take in the landscape or the big picture it becomes somewhat different or even less important. My favorite zooming out activity is going to the beach, having a coffee in a mall cafe or simply jogging around the block. Once we are able to gain some distance from our emotions, we will realize time changes emotions and point of view changes emotions. In other words, if we can give ourselves distance, our emotions will change with time and/or our point of view will change our emotions.

Give it a name

The second skill is to give our strong emotions a name. Once we have a name it no longer bounces around inside us but gives it a resting place in our mind. For myself, the feeling of anger is often most pronounced and dangerous. But knowing anger is really a secondary emotion and there is something else going on inside myself really helps. Soon I become aware that rather than being angry I am hurt by what is going on. Feeling hurt is much different than feeling angry.

That is why I am wearing a red scarf. I received an unpleasant email this morning and I feel very angry. Unfortunately, I do not have time to distance myself from my strong feelings. Since I love wearing a soft and fluffy scarf, it makes me feel snug as a bug. The color red is warning me to cool it and not say or do anything that will lead to later regrets. So far it is working. And I know tomorrow I will feel different about it.

Arlene Van Hove (avanhove@shaw.ca) is a therapist and a member of the Fleetwood CRC.

Speak – Write Paula Warkentin — The Truth

What is it/ In this cup, He's offered/ That
tastes just like/ His own blood/ A covering
for/ Our mishaps and indiscretions
Pouring out from us/ Streams of a flood
With gates boldly brawling/ Themselves wide
open/ To keep away/To lock out and distract
Others…from the very things/ And common
attitudes/ Of grace mis-configured that
You and I often lack

NO, NOT ME, NOT I, NOT EVER…well
sometimes/ But I prefer that no one really
ever knew/ About THE STUFF that boils up
inside my heart, discontentment/ Selfishness,
sour-molded crusted over like vomit spewed
PROJECTILE LIKE/ Coming out…FROM
THE HEART…says scripture!/ For that's (the
place)/ From which…you and I speak/ Where
both sweet and sour/ Come together/ Mangled mixture/ Like an odd shaped, unwanted
treat

Seek ye first the kingdom and/ His righteousness/ And all things will be/ Added
unto you/ PUT OFF the former way of life
and/ The self that is old/ Be renewed in your
minds/ Now made new/ New ? for who
and for when (and)/ By the way,… For how
long?/Is this "holy process"
(Really)…supposed to last?

I'm serious when I ask the question
OUT LOUD, TO YOUR FACES/Why?...does
the sound of my wording/ Make you gasp?
When, I've heard…that "we're all just human/ HOW MUCH can you, really expect
from me?"

I KNOW that God's word is true and sovereign/ What does it say in Ephesians 4, verse
22 (or) is it 23?/ OH…to be like GOD in true
righteousness and holiness/ And to put off
falseness speaking truthfully to your neighbour/ Hmmm…/ I would think is…like fine
wine/ Needing time to sit and age for years
Perhaps, before the taste has/ Just the right
texture and flavour

BUT THEN! We are called to be fragrant,
sweet like spice!/ Sugar COATED, kind
hearted and everything nice/ EVEN THO…
THAT'S NOT what we're originally made of
No I'm not calling you a toad 'cause that's
not new,/ It's rude…cold,/ AND BESIDES
"We Christians, DON'T DO (these) sorts of
things"/ Like carry anger/ With us to bed
Hear the devil/ SPEAK inside our head

NO, NOT ME, NOT I, NOT EVER.../ well
sometimes/But I prefer, that no one really
ever knew/About THE STUFF that boils up
inside my heart, discontentment/Selfishness,
sour-molded, crusted over like vomit spewed

I keep forgetting that we are CHRIST's
It's HIS body and HIS head/ So why do His
instructions to love, like HIM/ Become something… that I dread?/ When I DO NOT "get
it" right/ Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday
night/ And by the week's end, once again
I've still fallen short….to sin?/ When He who
has been stealing/ Should steal no more
And yet I do not pray enough/ Or place my
needs on the floor/ When these hands that
HE's given/ Have been closed, tight like fists
And later on, in the week/There is pain in the
wrists/ NOT BECAUSE of a condition (medical), needing to be DOCTOR-ED
BUT because my own heart, has turned
Hard knock… ROTTEN!

Did I just say that? OUT LOUD AGAIN/
BEFORE YOU?...MY BRETHEREN?/ But
I'm speaking "THE TRUTH"/ Is it not better
than…LIES SMOTHERING?/ When everything, not planted of the Father/ He promised…would be rooted UP/ Called to (His
table) to reason, together with HIM/ Each
heart's desire fully-met, by HIS cup/ A contents and portion poured/ Out from His rib –
caged side/ Every person coming hungry
A contrite spirit NOT DENIED

WELCOMED NAKEDNESS
ALL NEED REVEALING
HIS COVERING… JUST RIGHT
As we put on Christ

OUR mouths to be filled/ With help-ful
words/ THAT BUILD… because/ The lips of
the righteous feed many/That benefit those
who listen/ With eagerness, longing/ His love
abundant coming / Full, pure and plenty

NOT GRIEVING the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD
Sealed for the day of (our) redemption
Deleting BITTERNESS, rage, slander, malice
And every solitary…ill intension
Because LOVE works no evil/ Not even to it's
neighbour/ Come vagabond, slave, freeman
Or stranger/ No longer are we foreigners
But prisoners of Christ/ Having compassion
for each other/ With forgiveness enticed

Which calls us to be
IMITATORS of GOD
To put on His whole armour
With staff and rod/ And live a life, of love
In the footsteps that HE trod
As we walk
As we step
Just like Him

NO, NOT ME, NOT I, NOT EVER
Is a lie When
THE TRUTH
I choose to walk
IS HIS

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Paula is a poet, writer, lover of outcasts and wife of Kenny Warkentin. They live in Winnipeg. One of her greatest passions is to grow in the art of dancing with words.

Transition as an act of the will

As was the earthly man,
so are those who are of the earth;
and as is the man from heaven,
so also are those who are of heaven. I Cor. 15:48

A. A. VanRuler

The first person is from the earth, physical. Thus spoke the apostle in verse 47. No doubt he was thinking of Adam and the words in Genesis 2, where Adam is described as having been made from the dust of the earth. But, the apostle continued, the second Man is from heaven. He thought of course of Jesus Christ who came down from heaven. Here it is noteworthy, though, that the apostle cannot limit himself to those two people; he immediately calls to mind the many physical beings as well as the heavenly.

We must take careful note of that because, nowadays, there is a tendency, particularly among theologians, only to speak of those two, thereby simply including all the other ones. God only looks at those two, they say.

The theatre stage of world history is in that case rather emptier than Paul sees it. Paul's stage is full of, on the one hand, the many physical beings and, on the other hand, the many heavenly ones. Paul pays attention to them as well. And according to Paul, the Lord equally pays attention to them. God is not satisfied with just Adam and Christ. They are only the head, and God focuses on the body of which they are the head. It's about us. For that reason, we'd better be concerned about ourselves as well.

The king and his people

Don't think now that there is absolutely no distinction and that the one is only one of many. Adam and Jesus Christ continue to hold an extraordinary position. They are really the first and the second man, and as is the one, so are also the many in both categories.

The many belong to the one. They surround him and are enfolded in him. They show the same characteristics and live in the same circumstances.

There we find imitation and attribution, communion and place-holding between the one and the many, between Adam and the human generation, between Christ and his Church. That is why we can never capture this relationship in one word. What is in Adam and Jesus is attributed to us, and thus we participate in it. But it is also true that we follow both Adam and Jesus, and this following is as much a form of participation as it is a form of attribution. As head or representative or place-holder Adam and Jesus stand before God in our place. On the other hand, it is true as well that we live and die in communion with Adam *and* with Jesus. It is always about the one *and* the many, about the head *and* the body, about the king *and* his people.

So there are the physical ones and the heavenly ones. Those are two groups. But we have to be very careful about how we understand this. Is it a pure duality? Does one belong to either the one or to the other group? Are there so-called earthly people and so-called heavenly ones?

Paul would anxiously reject that kind of thinking. All people begin by being of the earth. They all belong to Adam, and they are all physical. Who denies that denies the creation and insults the Creator. There is no such thing as a group of people who are only heavenly. If that were true, we would very easily begin to think that whatever is of the earth is lower and inferior. But that's an insult to the Creator. Adam, in all his physicality and earthiness, was made by God. We must not lose sight of that. But then there is this: in Christ, God has done a new deed and given a new reality. And it is his intent to have all those who were in Adam cross over and come into Christ.

Call and response

Now there is a new question. How does a person come to this transition? How does one disentangle oneself from Adam's web and become grafted into Christ? In the deepest sense, there is only one answer to this question, and that is predestination. After all, our whole existence is founded in all aspects on God's dominion and his eternal pleasure.

But then that same question becomes even more poignant: how do we understand that duality of the physical ones and the heavenly ones as being founded in predestination? In other words, how do we see predestination? How are God's dominion and his eternal pleasure being realized in us?

Are they being realized in our *nature*, so that we either have a heavenly or a physical nature and, therefore, are destined to perdition or to eternal salvation? That thought again is one that Paul would anxiously reject. That thought makes mankind and not only mankind but actually also God, into a thing.

That divine dominion and pleasure are not realized as much in our nature, by which we are what we are, but in our *will*, in other words, what we *choose*. There are limits to that, of course. We cannot choose to be in Adam or not. We *are* in Adam by birth, and our birth was not a matter of *our* choice.

However, being in Adam, we can choose for Christ. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. But the work of the Spirit is to make the person work. The Spirit influences his or her will. It is for that reason that the gospel comes to us in the form of a message and call. It's the result of the Spirit's work when we hear and become obedient. But it is manifested only in this form that it is we ourselves who heed the message and the call and then become obedient. It is as if we choose of our own free will. The transition from Adam to Christ happens in the form of a choice. Then and only then do we become heavenly beings. The decision, the choice, then is not a matter of human nature but of the human will. Do you want to be saved? Do you want to participate in eternal life? Are you ready to be resurrected from the dead?

Now and not yet

By means of this choice it is not just the transition that happens; the reality of the resurrection becomes one's own reality as well. That reality is Paul's reason for saying that even *now* there are the physical as well as the heavenly beings. All those who have a heartfelt desire to belong to Christ are *right now* the heavenly beings.

Oh yes, there are a few things that will have to be fixed in them still. The resurrection must be revealed to them in its fullness on that great day of the Lord. Then they rise up visibly from all forms of decay. But in their rebirth in the Spirit and in their baptism they already share in eternal life, life that they will then receive in its full glory.

For that reason Paul's words here are not a simple statement and description: as is the physical one so are his offspring, and as is the heavenly one so are his offspring. There is a powerful movement indicated here. We move from the physical to the heavenly. A transition must take place. That transition happens in the form of an ongoing and persistent *willing* of the person. In Paul's words we find, therefore, a powerful *appeal:* Do we understand that this transition is happening in us? Are we prepared to participate in it? Our life is not nothing, even though it is subject to decay. There is something hugely important there because it has been redeemed in Christ's resurrection. That's why all God's glory is encapsulated in it. The question posed to us is, are we prepared already to see and to live life in this way – filled with eternal glory?

He shall be like a tree
Planted by the rivers of water,
That brings forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf shall not wither;
And whatever he does shall prosper.

Translated from the Dutch by Bram Hoff of St. Catharines, Ontario.

Wife of a friend

Lord, I endure
the suffering of
a wife,
dear wife
of a friend,
yesterday they took her
to the institute.

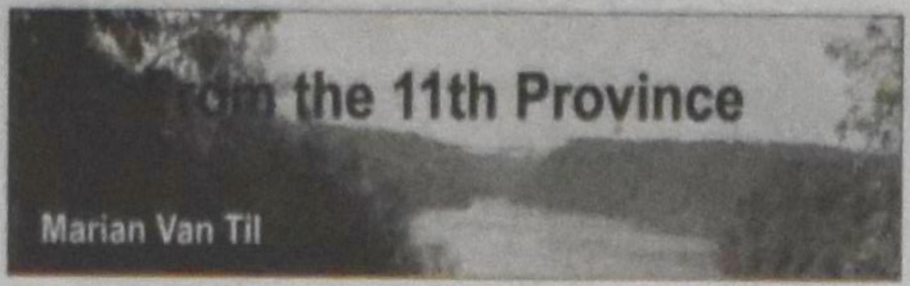
We heard the name
of her mental
classification,
we shuddered,
for is there
any hope?

Lord, she is only
twenty-six,
she has a husband
and a child and
these three they
were so
happy.

I am not asking You
for a miracle,
no, You
don't have
to do that,
but I do ask You for
your mercy,
because You can't
give up being merciful
when I recommend
someone to You.

Poem by Geert Boogaard and translated by Case J. Boot. See Nov. 9 issue for more Boogaard poetry.

Columns



Five great composers and I: sharing a worldview

The weekend after I write this column, I will be involved in two performances of Franz Joseph Haydn's oratorio *The Creation*. I will also be presenting, in tandem with the conductor of our St. Catharines-based symphony chorus, what he jokingly refers to as a "dog and pony show" before each concert. He and I will give our audiences background about the work, its times, and Haydn himself, to allow listeners to more fully enjoy that great oratorio. Haydn wrote it near the end of his career (1798) after being thrilled when hearing Handel oratorios in London.

I listen to classical music almost every day, often for many hours, while I work in my home office; and Ed and I listen further after supper if we are spending an evening reading. Naturally, I listen to a preponderance of music by the composers I love the best: Bach, Handel, Telemann, Mozart, Haydn. (That is not to say there isn't much other music I thoroughly enjoy.)

Thinking about that music, along with preparing my part of the pre-concert talk and rehearsing *The Creation,* has caused me to conjure an interesting (no, an *important*) fact: all of my favorite composers were Christians. (Admittedly, "favorites" is a lame word here, applicable as it is to everything from tastes in ice cream flavors to choices in listening to civilization's greatest music that deeply stirs one's heart and spirit.)

Each of these men had a life-encompassing faith, consciously lived, and in each one's music the Spirit of God seems quite evident to me. The first three were Lutherans, the latter two Roman Catholics. Yet their having stood in two quite different streams of Christianity (sometimes fiercely opposed streams) did not obscure the fact that they fundamentally shared a common faith and a common worldview. In Christ there is neither Lutheran nor Catholic (nor Calvinist)….

Not serious enough

Haydn (1732-1809), a biblically literate, daily-Mass attending Catholic, said when a critic frowned about his church music not being serious enough, "At the thought of God my heart leaps for joy, and I cannot help my music doing the same." Indeed, of all composers in the history of Western music, Haydn is known for his ebullience. Some modern critics have also taken him to task for it. Despite his music's sophistication, it is also almost naïvely good humored. That has been deemed incompatible with the supposed *Sturm und Drang* required for true greatness. And that is primarily why, in the 20th century, Haydn's ability as a great innovator was undervalued, despite his having been the "father" of both the string quartet and the symphony. (That disparaging view is now being corrected.)

It is obvious to me that those critics, in his own time and ours, did not understand how faith can – and should – inhabit the fabric of one's heart and soul, and, thus, what comes out of that heart and soul. Haydn was not good-humored because he was "shallow" or problem-free. His long marriage was thoroughly unhappy, but his reliance on God surely helped him endure. (There's no evidence he had extramarital affairs, though some modern historians have assumed it because women – except his musically dismissive wife, it seems – tended to find him charming. Of course adultery would have been antithetical to his faith.)

The praise which brings us together

I have no doubt at all that the five composers I've mentioned as my favorites are so precisely because they and I share a Christian worldview, and because they were able to profoundly meld that worldview with the prodigious musical talent God lavished on them. That common worldview and faith is not to be underestimated. If it is essential to a good marriage ("Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers," says Paul in the King James English I grew up hearing – you both need to be on the same fundamental spiritual wavelength), it is also fundamental to the daily, soul-touching activity of imbibing the music that adds so deeply to my very person and experience of God's good creation.

Which brings me back to *Creation*. In Haydn's musical *Creation* (based on Genesis, the Psalms and pre-Fall parts of Milton's *Paradise Lost*), descriptions of the six creation days naturally erupt in great choruses of praise, the most famous being "The heavens are telling the glory of God," from Psalm 19. But the final chorus aptly sums up our response to God's magnificent creative work, his power and glory. It encapsulates Haydn's own response to God. May such praise also characterize *our* lives:

Sing the Lord, ye voices all!
Utter thanks all ye his works.
Celebrate his pow'r and glory.
Let his name resound on high.
The Lord is great,
His praise shall last for aye.
Amen!

Marian Van Til is a former C.C. editor who lives in Youngstown, NY, with her husband and five cats. Her book about life with cats, Confessions of a Cataholic, *was released on Reformation Day. For a signed copy see < www.WordPowerPublishing.com> or write Marian at mvantil@roadrunner.com, or call 716-745-7073.*

Not stewards but owners

I start this series with some trepidation, because I know that what I will write may sound unfamiliar to many. I am reading Karen Armstrong's new book *The Case for God,* in which she continuously stresses that what we believe needs constant updating. It is my sincere opinion that we live in entirely new times, where the old answers don't work anymore. I am comforted by George Bernard Shaw's remark that "all evolution in thought and conduct must at first appear as heresy." So, as I start my new column "Co-owning the Earth," expect some unorthodox opinions. I trust that if I stray too far, no doubt you will rise in brotherly or sisterly love and gently correct me, giving valid reasons, of course, for where I have erred.

I state that we co-own the earth, that we are not stewards, but owners. I base that on Psalm 115:16 which says that (TNIV) "The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth he has given to humankind," which means that we live in a huge condominium where we together are responsible for its wellbeing.

Demonic powers

But, you will object, doesn't Psalm 24 say that "The Earth is the Lord's"? Not so fast. I don't deny that. Suppose I have a very valuable painting, say a van Gogh. It's my personal possession, and I can do with it whatever I want – maim it, neglect it, even sell it! However, though I own it, it still is a "van Gogh." That's how it is with the earth: it still is the Lord's. He is still the creator, the architect, the maker of heaven and earth. But he gave it to us, and (here comes the tragic news) what did we do? "We sold it."

Writes Dr. J.H.Bavinck in *De Mensch en zijn Wereld* (and I translate a section from page 53), "God has surrendered his world to vanity, to destruction, with the result that we humans, who wanted to be kings in God's beautiful kingdom, live in a world that no longer wants to be subject to him. Something happened in creation, something we can't fathom, but which we experience daily in the form of terrible happenings. Demonic powers have thrown themselves onto nature, onto humanity, onto the radiant creation."

Henri J. M. Nouwen echoes this when he writes, "Indeed the powers of darkness rule the world. We should not be surprised when we see human suffering and pain all around us. But we should be surprised by joy every time we see that God, not the Evil One, has the last word." We, as human race, changed partners in the Garden of Eden and pledged allegiance to the Great Adversary. Instead of relying on God, we mortgaged the earth, in effect, sold it to Satan, who now calls the shots. Jesus acknowledged this when he called him "The Prince of this World." Matthew 4:8 proves that conclusively.

So it's not surprising that we, as co-owners, have not done a very good job of taking care of the earth: we have emptied its seas, mined its mountains, wasted its waters, ruined its rivers, and now are changing its climate. We are on the way to hell. C. S. Lewis once wrote, "The road to hell – the road away from God – is a gradual one: the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without mile posts, without sign posts. The road away from God is the do nothing road." We have been on that "do nothing" road for a long time, thanks to having become fossil fuel slaves.

That has to change. When Christ returns and claims his kingdom, we must be ready for him. That means that we, as much as is humanly possible in this inhuman world, must live a pollution-free life, so that our transition to the holy state of the Kingdom is smooth.

The Citarum River, near Jakarta, Indonesia, displays the shocking abuse that mankind has subjected the earth to.

'Desolate'

We often pray, "Your Kingdom Come," perhaps not fully grasping the implications of that request: it is a prayer for the speedy arrival of the New Earth. Writes Isaiah (Isaiah 62:4) – and here comes another possible heresy, "No longer will you be called 'Deserted,' or name your land 'Desolate,' but you will be called 'My delight is in you,' and 'Your Land Married,' for the Lord will take delight in you and your land will be married." Married to whom you may ask? Revelation 21 picks up that theme, when it pictures "The Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband." Yes, the land will be married to us. The Bride is not the church, the Bride is the Land, the New Creation, to which we, the human race, will be married, together with Christ – the Son of Man, humanity personified, the Primus inter Pares, the First among equals.

Enough heresies for one column.

Bert Hielema was born in 1928, lives in Tweed, Ont., is the sole tenor in a 12 voice church choir. This column and many other writings can be seen at http://hielema.ca/blog. Comments to bert@hielema.ca

Commentary

Benedict XVI's encyclical Caritas in Veritate (Pt I)

Bert den Boggende

For more on the encyclical, see the news article in our October 23 issue.

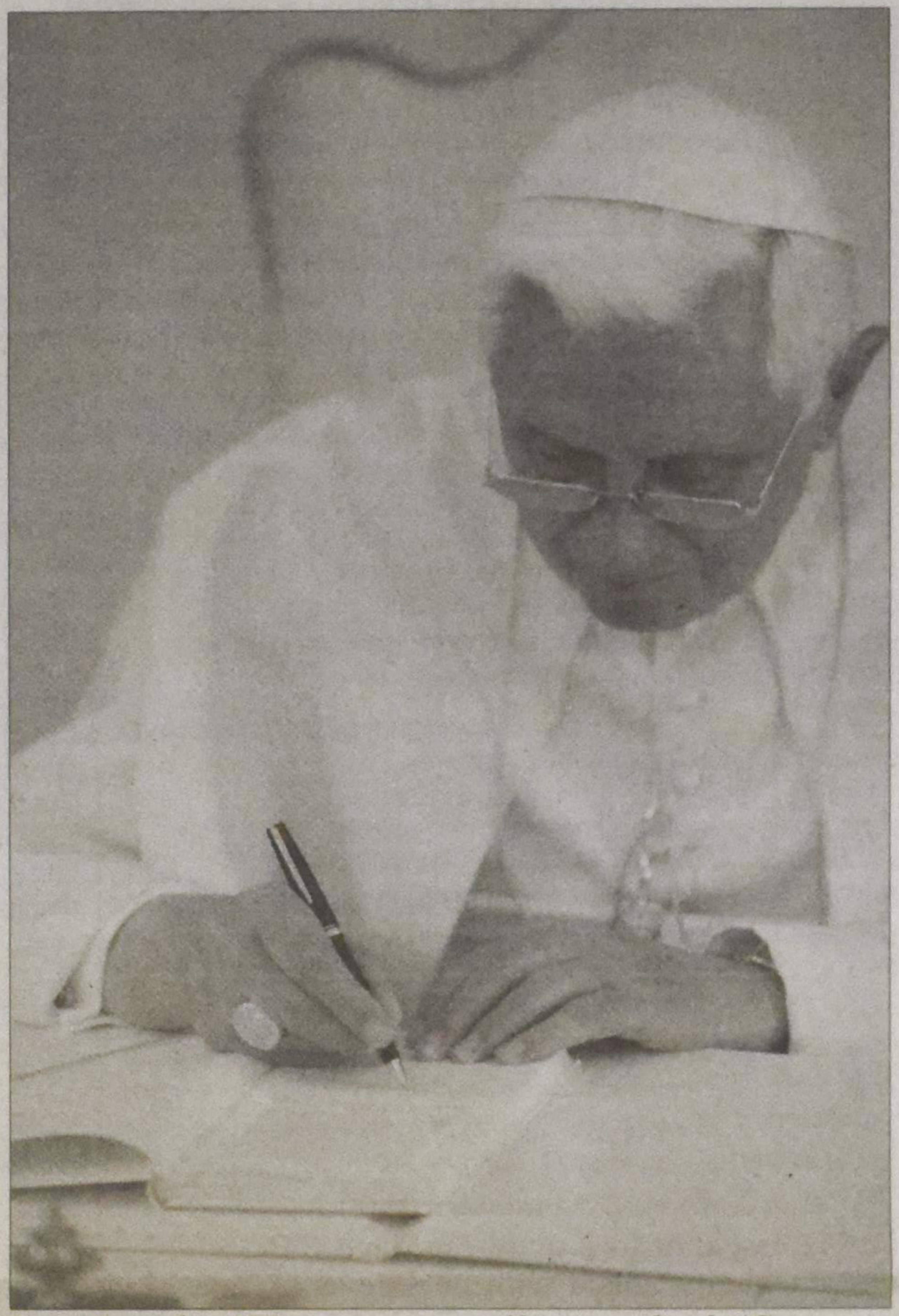
Issued on 29 June, 2009, Caritas et Veritate is a lengthy (including endnotes, it's 55 pages long) and wide-ranging encyclical, standing in the tradition of Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum (1891), Pius XI's Quadragesimo Anno (1931) and Paul VI's Populorum Progressio (1967). Its basis is Christ's witness to charity as our guide and principal driving force in all our actions, since "everything has its origin in God's love, everything is shaped by it, everything is directed towards it." Therefore, love is at the heart of the Church's social doctrine, although society often dismisses it as irrelevant. Charity, however, needs "to be understood and practised in the light of truth, [for] only in truth does charity shine forth and can it be shared and communicated."

Truth-filled charity "demands justice: recognition and respect for the legitimate rights of individuals and peoples" and "strives to build the earthly city. [Moreover, it] transcends justice and completes it in the logic of giving and forgiving." Additionally, "to desire the common good is a requirement of justice and charity." When properly connected, they "contribute to the building of the city of God, [and thus] the earthly city is a prefiguration of the undivided city of God." However, "the Church does not have technical solutions to offer and does not claim to interfere in any way in the politics of States, [but it] does have a mission of truth to accomplish."

Pope Paul VI already remarked that "evangelization would not be complete if it did not take account of the unceasing interplay of the Gospel and of man's concrete life, both personal and social [and that] works of justice, peace and development [were] part and parcel of evangelization." Evangelism, which includes the "promotion [of] the good of every man and of the whole man," is everyone's vocation. In a globalized world, such promotion would make us neighbours but not necessarily brothers. However, human efforts are insufficient to establish fraternity; that would only be possible through "a transcendent vocation from God the Father, who loved us first, teaching us through the Son what fraternal charity is."

Progress and profit

Benedict expresses concern about the crises afflicting the world today. One concern is profit: "Profit is useful if it serves as a means towards a [productive and useful] end. Once profit becomes the exclusive goal, if it is produced by improper means and without the common good as its ultimate end, it risks destroying wealth and creating poverty." This improper use has led to "badly managed and largely speculative financial dealing, large-scale migration of peoples, often provoked by some particular circumstance and then given insufficient attention, [and] the unregulated exploitation of the earth's resources." As a consequence, "the scandal of inequalities continues [and] new sectors of society [are] succumbing to poverty and new forms of poverty emerging." Even poor countries are not free from a wasteful and consumerist tendency, thus contributing to "ongoing situations of dehumanizing deprivation." Other contributing factors are the "corruption and illegality in the conduct of the economic and political class," multinational corporations and local producers failing to respect the human rights of workers, international aid diverted from its proper end, and rich countries with "excessive zeal protecting knowledge through an unduly rigid assertion of the right to intellectual property, especially in the field of health care." As a result, "the current crisis obliges us to re-plan our journey, to set ourselves new rules and to discover new forms of commitment, to build on positive experiences and to reject negative ones." In order to do so, it's necessary "to liberate ourselves from ideologies, which often oversimplify reality in artificial ways." Evenhandedly chastising rich and poor individuals and nations, Benedict reminds them that "progress of a merely economic and technological kind is insufficient. Development needs above all to be true and integral."



Pope Benedict XVI signs a copy of his encyclical, "Caritas in Veritate" ("Charity in Truth"). The pope's social encyclical, released July 7, addresses the global economic crisis. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano via Reuters)

Refocus on humanity

While Paul VI "assigned a central, albeit not exclusive, role to public authorities," Benedict slightly moves away from this "socialist" perspective: "it seems more realistic to re-evaluate [the state's public authorities'] role and their powers, which need to be prudently reviewed and remodeled so as to enable them to address the challenges of today's world." Still, his sympathy is with "systems of protection and welfare finding it hard to pursue their goals of true social justice in today's profoundly changed environment." The process of setting up "favorable fiscal regimes and deregulation of labour markets" has led "to a downsizing of social security systems as the price to be paid for seeking greater competitive advantage in the global market, with consequent grave danger for the rights of workers and for fundamental human rights." Benedict, like Leo XIII, promotes workers' associations as a means to protect these rights, reminding "everyone, especially governments engaged in boosting the world's economic and social assets, that the primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is man, the human person in his or her integrity: Man is the source, the focus and the aim of all economic and social life"

Lately, "possibilities of interaction between cultures have increased significantly, giving rise to new openings for intercultural dialogue." Accepting its advantages. he also notes "that the increased commercialization of cultural exchange leads to a twofold danger: a cultural eclecticism that is often assumed uncritically and viewed as substantially interchangeable, easily yielding to relativism; and a cultural leveling and indiscriminate acceptance of types of conduct and lifestyles." These opposite dangers, separating culture from human nature, contribute to "man ending up being reduced to a mere cultural statistic. When this happens, humanity runs new risks of enslavement and manipulation."

Continued next issue

Bert den Boggende (bertdenb@yahoo.com) has a Ph.D in British history and is a retired teacher who still does some substituting. He lives in Brooks, Alberta.

Ontario Not-for-Profits: Do you need funding support?

Marion Radsma

Every year the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ontario government, doles out about $120 million in 1,500 grants to various non-profit groups in the province – and the Foundation is interested in finding new worthy candidates for their support.

In a roundtable discussion held on October 22nd with various representatives of the ethnic media, a number of Trillium Foundation executives, including Robin Cardozo the CEO and Patricia Else the Director of Grant Operations, explained the wide range of activities that OTF will support.

OTF distributes money in four sectors: Arts and Culture; Environment; Sports and Recreation; and Human and Social Services. The largest grants are reserved for groups and agencies which serve more than one of these sectors. Grants that benefit new Canadians are priorities for the Trillium Foundation. Note that OTF will not fund religious organizations or projects.

OTF will grant dollars to help not-for-profits build capacity in diverse ways including capital investment (computers), projects (feasibility studies) and operations (rent, paid staff, repairs). Most grants are extended for one to three years, although they may last up to five years. OTF has offices with experienced personnel in 16 districts across the province. To help you build a business case and fill out the required application forms, the organization offers workshops as well as one-on-one assistance.

The OTF representatives at the Roundtable warned, however, that you might need to apply more than once because there is considerable demand for financial assistance, especially given the effects of the economic downturn on not-for-profit outreach programs.

If you live in Ontario and would like support for your group or project, you should certainly check out the availability of OTF funding. Visit the OTF website at www.trilliumfoundation.ca for more details about your funding options, grant application requirements and the contact information for your local OTF agent.

Marion Radsma is an independent learning consultant living in Toronto.

Classifieds

Obituaries

Janet Veenema (nee VanderWey)

at 83 years went to be with her Lord October 30th, surrounded by family at Stirling Heights LTCC after a long and courageous battle with Parkinsons.

Janet was a loving mother, a faithful marital partner, a caring nurse and a loyal friend. She will be sorely missed by her husband, John, of 53 years, and her children and grandchildren: son A. John, his wife Paula and their children Alannah and Michael; daughter Jean, her husband Curtis and their children Emily, Kathryn and Christian; daughter Margaret, her husband Jacob and their children Krista, Pieter and Ashley; son Alvin, his wife Brenda, and their children Nicole, Janelle and Stephen; and daughter Elisabeth, her husband Glen and their daughter Lilian.

She is also survived by siblings Riekus, Appie, Henk and Anneke in the Netherlands as well as her two sisters Zus (Klaas) Epema of Guelph and Sjouk (Peter) Drost of Tillsonburg. Predeceased by her brother Jan.

The Funeral service was conducted by Reverend John Koole on Monday, November 2 at Maranatha Christian Reformed Church in Cambridge. Interment followed at Mount View Cemetery. Donations made to the Christian Blind Mission, the Leprosy Mission Canada or the charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family.

Correspondance: John Veenema
1429 Sheffield Road Box 6508 RR 1
Cambridge ON NIR 5B2

On October 16, 2009,
the Lord welcomed home his child

Elizabeth (Bep) VanWaveren

Our mother was born on November 22, 1927 in Honselersdijk, The Netherlands and immigrated to Hamilton, Ontario, Canada in 1948.

She was an amazing mother and grandmother to:
Mary (1950-1999) & John (Grace) Karsten, *Coaldale, Alberta*
Mike (Chris), Lisa (Randy), Elaine (1973), Tricia (Doug), Brian (Rebecca), Rachel (Adam)
Patricia and George Huizinga, *Woodford, Ontario*
Wayne (Tina), Richard (Vivian), Peter (1986), Andrew
Wilma and Tom Bergstra, *Park Head, Ontario*
Caitlin, Peter, Graham, Marlyse, Janelle (1993)
Jane and Bernie Vloo, *Barnwell, Alberta*
Zachary, Aaryn
Helen and Murray Lobert, *Edmonton, Alberta*
Kevin (Nikki), Dennis, Justine

Our mother's life was enriched by three wonderful husbands and their families:
Pieter VanderLugt (1922-1957)
William Reitsma (1918-1973)
Matthijs VanWaveren (1922-2004)

She is lovingly remembered by sisters and brothers in The Netherlands and Canada, stepchildren and their families in The Netherlands, and 13 great-grandchildren in Canada.

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! 1John 3:1

Funeral service was held on Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at First Christian Reformed Church, Taber, Alberta with Pastor Jim Zondervan officiating.

Correspondence address: Jane Vloo Box 7
Barnwell AB T0K 0B0

Suddenly on October 27, 2009 at 57 years of age.

Norman Arthur Knibbe

He will be dearly missed by his loving wife of 32 years, Joanne (nee Ellens) and children, Hester & David de Groot, Marcella & Steve Haanstra, Eric, Suzanne & (Wayne Veenstra), Elena and Rhiannon.

Born on March 1st, 1952, Norman was the eldest son of Margaret and the late Edo Knibbe. The youngest Charter member of the Springdale Christian Reformed Church, he was an active lifelong member of the congregation and will be remembered by many for his dedication in service to his Lord.

He attended Springdale Christian School where he completed 8 grades and went on to graduate from Toronto District Christian High School. He has remained a staunch supporter of Christian education ever since, becoming a member of the TD finance committee, heading up the TD Chapter board, but most of all, sending his own children to both Holland Marsh District Christian School and TDCH. He completed his degree at Ryerson in the Mechanical Engineering Program and enjoyed his work as a mobile trailer service mechanic. He loved to be outdoors and for 18 years he also worked the land on his parent's farm in the Holland Marsh. Over the last couple of months, Norman, who was rarely sick, struggled with his health. God took him home on Tuesday, October 27, while he was resting in his work van.

Norman was part of a large and loving family and his wisdom, patience and humour will be greatly missed. He was the son-in-law of Auke and Addy Ellens. Brother of Rita & Gary Aalbers, Harry & Alda Knibbe, Darlene & Graham Barraclough and Marvin & Anita Knibbe. Brother-in-law of Eric & Jo-Anne Ellens, Chris & Saskia Ellens, Jessica & Dale Antonides, Audrey & Maurice Ferkranus and Rosemarie & Rob Radcliffe. Lovingly remembered by many nieces and nephews.

A service celebrating Norman's life was held on November 2, 2009 at the Springdale Christian Reformed Church, Bradford, Ontario. A memorial donation can be made to the Holland Marsh District Christian School or the Toronto District Christian High School.

Correspondence: 766 Simcoe Rd RR 4
Bradford ON L3Z 2A6

Born: Honselersdijk, Holland on April 7, 1913
Died: Sarnia, Ontario on November 9, 2009

On November 9, 2009, the Lord took home our father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Pieter Baljeu

At the age of 96
He was predeceased by his wife of 70 years, Johanna Koorneef in 2006.
He was the father, grandfather & great-grandfather of:
Jerry and Debbie Baljeu (Diane 1980) *Sarnia, ON*
Brenda and Richard Bright, *Oakville, ON*
Jeff and Debbie Baljeu, *Sarnia, ON*
Annette Baljeu (1981)
Eric and Ginette Baljeu, *St. Catharines* – Alyssa
Irene and Henk Woudsma, *Sarnia, ON*
Edwin and Natashja Woudsma, *London, ON* – Kyra, Taya
Linda and Scott Fletcher, *London, ON*
Mark and Ursula Woudsma, *San Jose, CA*
Peter and Rita Baljeu, *Windsor, ON*
Michael and Lashell Baljeu, *Gobles, MI* – Daniel, Kaitlyn, Hannah
Alan Baljeu, *Windsor, ON*
Rachel Baljeu, *Grand Rapids, MI*
Corrina and Curtis Doell, *Calgary, AB*
Maria and Hans Devries
Jennifer Devries, *Duncan, BC* – Caleb
Angela Devries, *Trenton, ON* – Jessica
Sarah and Todd Patterson, *Burlington, ON* – Tyler, Dylan
Steven Devries, *Trenton, ON*
Albert and Noreen Baljeu, *Sarnia, ON*
Lauren Baljeu, *Den Hague, Netherlands*
Philip Baljeu, *Toronto, ON*

Pieter's love for family, flowers, music, and travel will be greatly missed by all. The funeral service was held at Smith Funeral Home in Sarnia, ON on November 12, 2009, led by Pastor Craig Hoekema of Living Hope CRC, Sarnia.

Correspondence address: Irene Woudsma
1174 Ryan St, Sarnia ON N7S 1R8

Holidays

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Events

Nederlandse Kerst Zang Dienst
Sunday, December 6th at 7:00 p.m.
Emmanuel Reformed Church,
170 Clarke St. Woodstock, ON
with Rev. Henry DeBolster.
Fellowship and Refreshments following the service

Handel's Messiah
Grand Philharmonic choir
Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony,
Howard Dyck, conductor
December 5. 2009, 7:30 pm
Centre in the Square in **Kitchener**
further information contact:
Linie Broer: Broer@csolve.net

NOEL

'Ancient Promise, Holy Child',
an evening of seasonal and sacred music featuring pianist Monica Heeg-Admiral, vocalists Aileen Dekkers & Tjits Van Reenen, guitarist Rich Freeman, and other musical guests.

December 4 at 8 p.m.
Maranatha CRC, York
Admission: $10
All proceeds to the Caledonia & District Food Bank

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Heritage Service

Sunday afternoon, December 13, 2009, at 3 p.m.
First Christian Reformed Church,
201 4th Ave. W. Owen Sound
Pastor J. Veenstra & Mr. P. Van Zyverden, organ.

Theme:
"Hoe zal ik U ontvangen?"

Thrill to the music & memories of 12 old Dutch Christmas carols (incl. "Ere Zij God!")
Offering for local Food Bank.
****
Welkom
Social hour following.
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Travel /ForSale /Jobs

Conductor, Ron Greidanus

Ron Greidanus, a dynamic young pianist and conductor, was born and raised on a small dairy operation outside Clinton, Ontario. It was clear from an early age that he would not make his living with black and white cows; however, black and white piano keys seemed to draw him in.

During his post-graduate years in Amsterdam, Greidanus's interest in early music began to blossom. He has performed as a guest pianist with numerous orchestras in both North America and Europe, including with the Vancouver Philharmonic, the Rochester Philharmonic, the Brampton Symphony, and the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Orchestra. The Georgetown Bach Chorale, started by Greidanus in 2000, is a small chamber choir and orchestra that focuses on the music of the Baroque period.

The Georgetown Bach Chorale will be performing Handel's momentous masterpiece "Messiah" on Friday November 27th at 8 p.m. and Sunday November 29th.

See related ad p. 23 for more information.

Note: Our next issue is the Christmas Issue (Dec. 14). If you wish to send greetings or advertise or need more information, please email: admin@christiancourier.ca or call 905-937-3314.

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Parent Professionals

Mutual Support Systems of the Niagara region, a private, non-profit agency providing residential care and treatment for children **invites applications** for the position of **House Parents**.

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Visit www.mutualsupport.net for more information. *Position commences February 2010.*

Please contact: **Randy Klassen, Associate Director-Human Resources**
905-892-4332 rklassen@mutualsupport.net

Mutual Support is a member of the Ontario Association of Residences Treating Youth.

Hamilton District Christian High
Invites applicants for the position of

Vice-Principal of Learning

HDCH invites qualified applicants with a minimum of 5 years teaching or related experience, to apply for the position of Vice-Principal of Learning. The successful candidate will demonstrate the following attributes:

- a clear understanding of and a passion for student learning through Christian education;
- a heartfelt desire to bring the lordship of Jesus Christ to all areas of life;
- a commitment to demonstrate servant leadership with a large dedicated staff and an established administrative team ;
- enthusiasm for and understanding of working with professional learning communities;
- excellent communication, organizational, and team building skills;
- strong interpersonal and relationship skills with young people.

A more specific job description is posted at www.hdch.org. Interested candidates should address letters of application, resumes and/or questions to:

George Van Kampen, Principal
Hamilton District Christian High School
92 Glancaster Rd, Ancaster, ON, L9G 3K9
Telephone: 905-648-6655
Email: gvankampen@hdch.org

Application deadline: January 13, 2010.

With gratitude for his faithful leadership, the Board of Trustees of Calvin Theological Seminary has accepted the decision of Dr. Cornelius Plantinga, Jr. to step down as President following the academic year 2010–2011.

A Presidential Search Committee has been appointed to recommend the next

President of Calvin Theological Seminary

Nominations and applications may be submitted to
presidentialsearch@calvinseminary.edu
before February 1, 2010.

Please visit *www.calvinseminary.edu/presidentialsearch* for further information.

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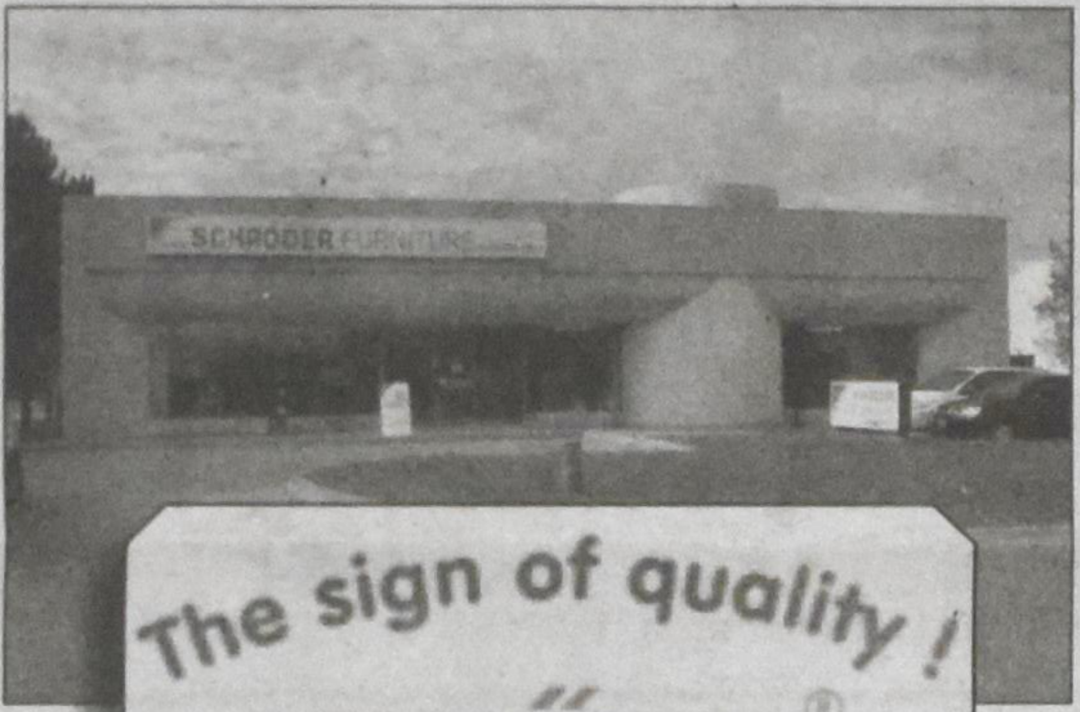

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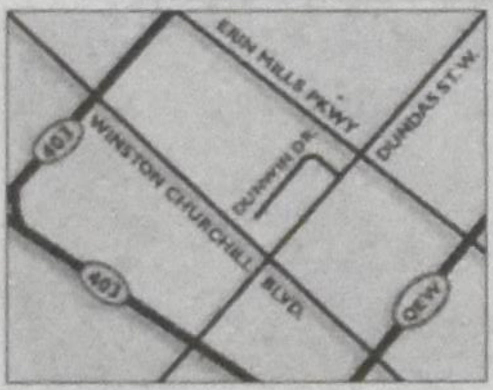

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Based on Royal Bank of Canada's Prime rate - not to exceed 7%

On Oct 26th, 2009, Elim Investments were accruing interest at 3.25% & 4%

ELIM Village

For more information regarding investment with Elim Village, contact **Terry-Lynn Dryfhout** at **tld@elimvillage.com** or call **604.583.3546 Ext 4031**
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Events

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov 27 The Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS) invites you to the retirement dinner and celebration for Dr. Adriaan Guldemond at Kings Christian Collegiate, Oakville, ON. RSVP by Nov.13. Contact Samantha at 905-648-2100 or samanthab@oacs.org.

Nov 27, 29 Handel's Messiah. See ad below.

Nov. 28 Toronto District Christian High School invites you to the Grand Opening and Dedication of their Science and Media Centre wing. Refreshments and guided tours from 1 pm. Official ceremony at 3 p.m. 388 Woodbridge Ave., **Woodbridge**, ON.

Nov. 29 Dutch Service will be held in the Ancaster Christian Reformed Church at 3:00 p.m.

Dec. 4 Maranatha CRC, York, 'Ancient Promise, Holy Child', an evening of seasonal and sacred music Time: 8 p.m. More information p.16

Dec 5 Handel's Messiah Grand Philharmonic choir Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, Howard Dyck, conductor. **7:30 p.m.** Centre in the Square in **Kitchener** More information p.16.

Dec 6 Nederlandse Kerst Zang Dienst, Emmanuel Reformed Church, 170 Clarke St., **Woodstock**, ON at 7:00 p.m. with Rev. Henry DeBolster. Fellowship and Refreshments following the service

Dec 12 Liberation Choir presents A Christmas Celebration Concert, 7;30 **Drayton** Reformed Church. See ad.

Dec 13 Heritage Service at 3 p.m.First Christian Reformed Church, 201 4th Ave. W. **Owen Sound**. Pastor J. Veenstra & Mr. P. Van Zyverden, organ.Theme:"Hoe zal ik U ontvangen?"Thrill to the music & memories of 12 old Dutch Christmas carols (incl. "Ere Zij God!") Offering for local Food Bank. Social hour following,.

Dec 16 Concert IN PRAISE OF GOD'S SON with the Ambassadors Christian Male chorus, the Women's Advent Singers and Rev. Stephen Terpstra as organist at Mt. **Hamilton** CRC, 7:30 p.m.

Dec 18 Concert IN PRAISE OF GOD'S SON, 7:30 p.m. in Ebenezer CRC in **Jarvis**, Ont.

Dec 19 Liberation Choir presents A Christmas Concert. See ad.

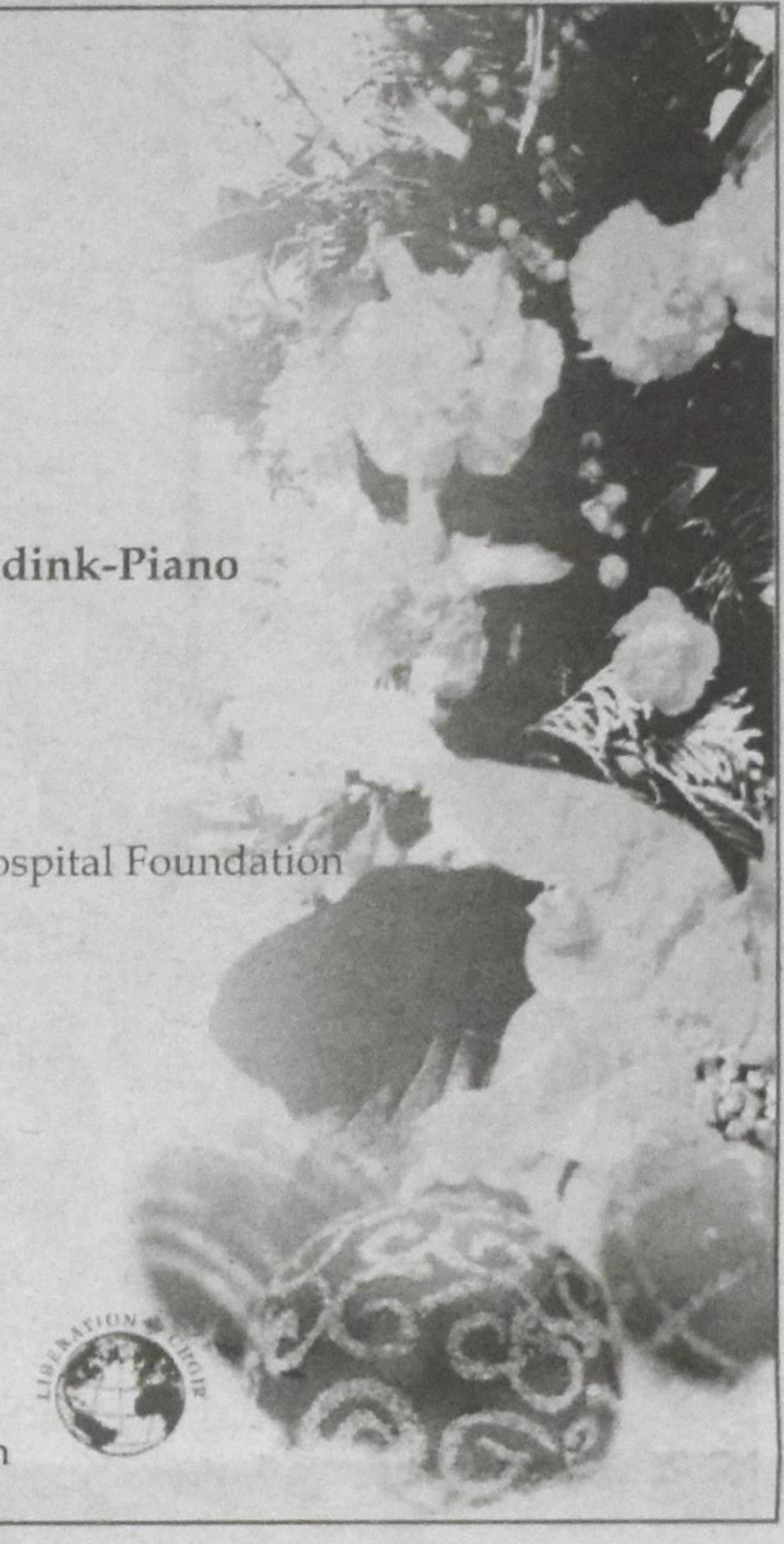
A Christmas Celebration Concert
Liberation Choir

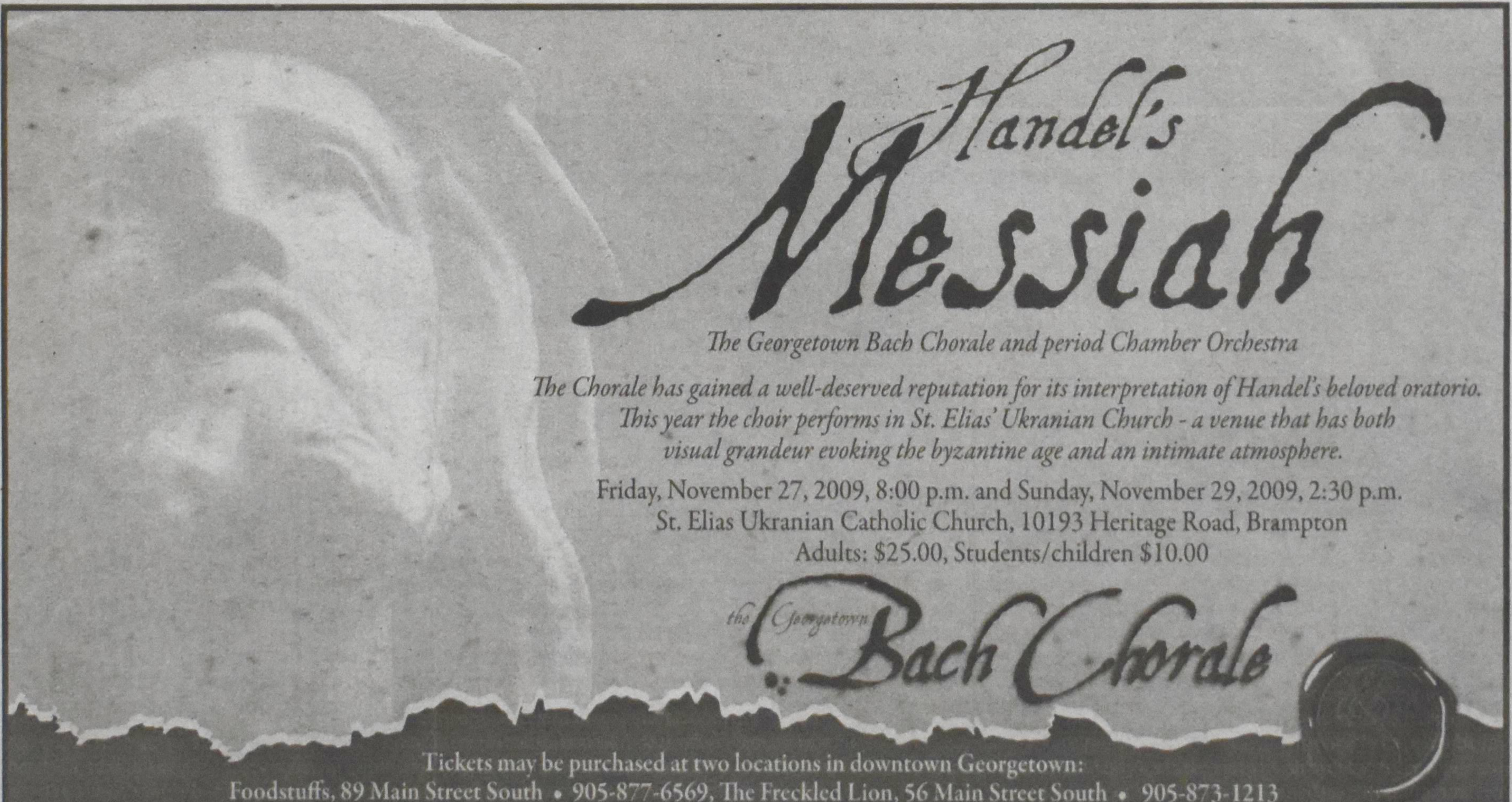
Directed by Rob Kinnear
with **Stuart Laughton, Trumpet (Dec 19)**
Accompanists: Chris Dawes - Organ, Sharon Sandink-Piano

Saturday December 12, 7:30pm
Drayton Reformed Church
74 Wellington Rd N, Drayton
Freewill Offering, proceeds to Palmerston & District Hospital Foundation

Saturday, December 19, 7:30pm
Rehoboth United Reformed Church
Glancaster & Garner Road, Ancaster

Tickets - $15.00 incl tax
For tickets contact Gail Wemekamp
gwemekamp@cogeco.ca, 905-635-4129
Or Brian Bignell
dorbri11@cogeco.net, 905-681-3776
Tickets available at the door - www.liberationchoir.com





News

For the love of an Institute

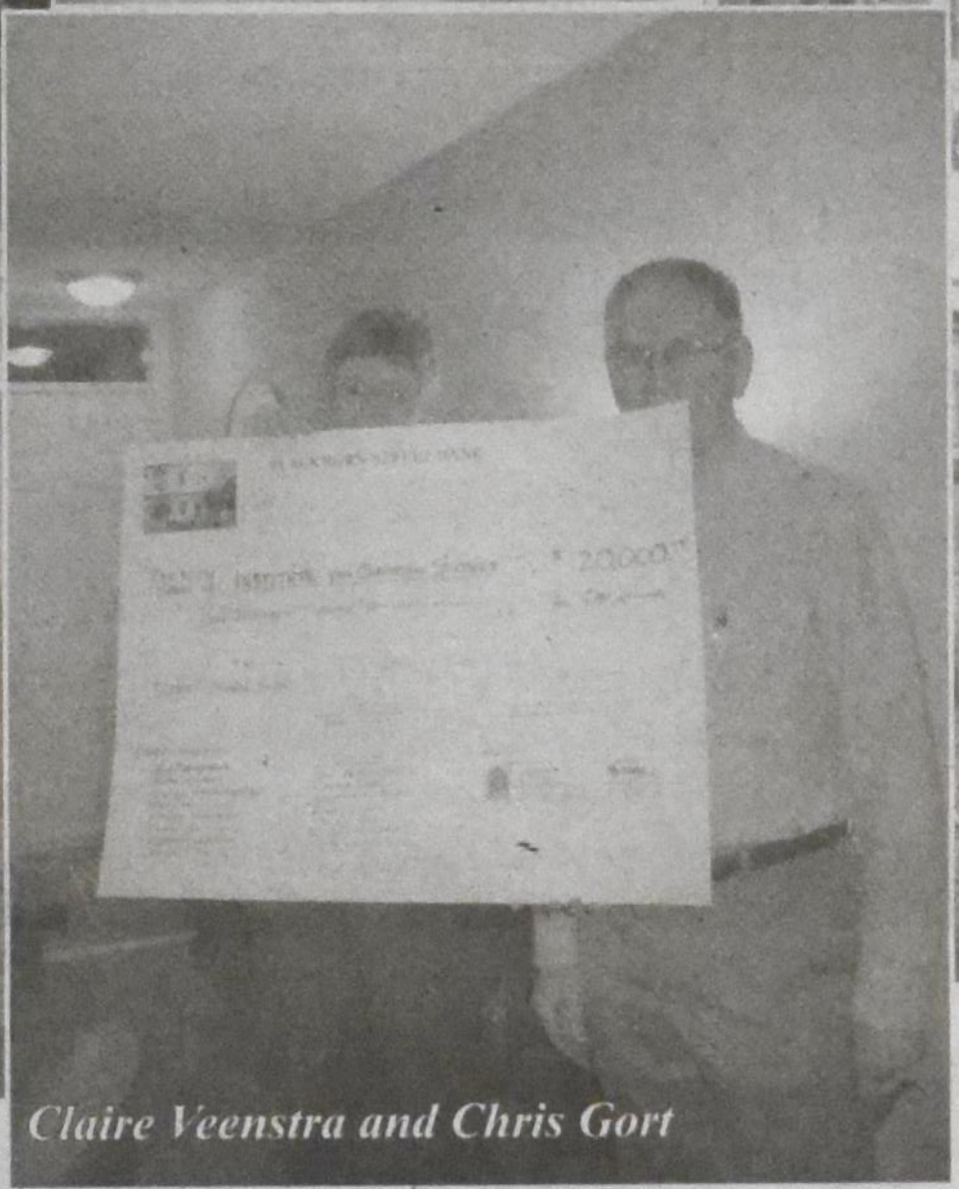
Vicky Dykstra, with notes from Roland Jonker and Joe Koole

TORONTO, Ont. – The Institute of Christian Studies in Toronto recently acquired a gift of $120,000 because two creative men shared their expertise in a unique renovation project, sold the renovated house, and donated the proceeds. Joe Koole, a retired banker, and Roland Jonker, an architect, both long-term supporters of the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS), collaborated on the renovation and subsequent sale of a row house in the Riverdale area which was originally built as housing for guards at the Don Jail. These men consider ICS to be a worthy recipient because, as Koole states, "ICS is a valuable contributor in the area of graduate education in North America and many other countries. Many professors at Christian Universities and Colleges are graduates of ICS."

"Joe talked me into it," says Jonker, after he agreed to have a look at the house to determine whether the project was feasible. After weighing financial and market risks, they decided to proceed. Although both men put their own physical labour into the renovation, they also hired help. Says Koole, "Roland has many contacts, and we were able to hire professionals." In addition, some casual labour was used and volunteers helped with the deck, landscaping, and cleaning both interior and exterior. They were also blessed in being able to procure good building materials such as windows, stairs, hardwood flooring, and appliances at favourable prices.

The unique little house, which is only 11.5 feet wide with a total square footage of 660 feet, provided some challenges to the renovators. First, the crawl space had to be excavated by hand. With the aid of shovels, conveyor, and wheelbarrow, 35 cubic meters of soil was removed from the crawl space. Second, with the crawl space soil removed, it became clear that the house had no foundations, so footings and concrete foundation walls were built to support the structure.

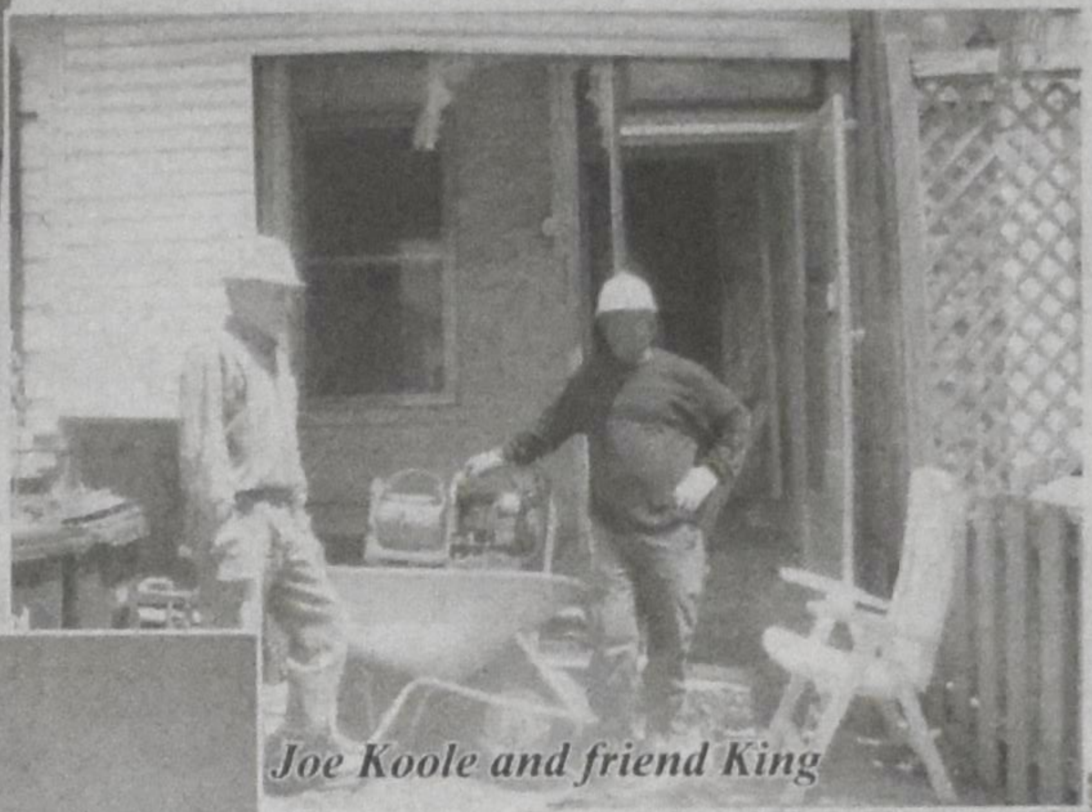
Roland Jonker



Claire Veenstra and Chris Gort

Fruitful partnership

Division of labour was established in such a way that both men could contribute their expertise when and where most needed. Jonker's role was to provide drawings, to obtain permits, to deal with the city, and to communicate with the contractors on contractual and technical issues. Another of his tasks was to re-design the house to make it feel more spacious. Being the banker, Koole's role involved the finances and the tax planning. In addition, he was nominated as the on-site boss because retirement afforded him the luxury of having daytime hours to spend as he desired.



Joe Koole and friend King

The renovation project was blessed from start to finish. Work began on May 1, 2009, the house was listed with a local realtor on September 24, and by October 6, the realtor, Roland and Coby Jonker, and Joe and Joan Koole gathered around the table to look at several attractive offers. An offer was chosen and now the house is a blessing to new owner Anna, a young professional lady.

Further blessings abounded and included sustained good health of all participants, cooperative professionals, willing volunteers, and a rising market value. The city and the neighbourhood are blessed by the transformation of a derelict little house into a quality residence. The contractors were blessed because they learned how to take a house through a full renovation process and receive an income for their work. The project also blessed the adjacent neighbours who now have properly heat and sound insulated firewalls between their unit and the renovated house.

Both Koole and Jonker feel blessed because they had fun renovating the house and are gratified by the outcome.

After all expenses were paid, the project netted about $133,000.00. Of this amount, $120,000 has gone to ICS, $7000 to the Lighthouse Ministry in Toronto, $5000 to projects and needs in Haiti through CRWM, and $1,000 to Christian Blind International. As Jonker says, "What could be better than that?"

Vicky is a mother of five adult children, a wife, a grandmother, and a recently retired teacher who lives in Ancaster, Ontario.

Reader's Photo

"I was visiting my family two years ago in Sri Lanka, and took this photo of a Dutch Reformed Church in Bambalapitiya. It is now called Christian Reformed." Charmaine Haan

If you have a photo you would like to share, email it to angela@christiancourier.ca. The photos will also be shared on our website: www.christiancourier.ca

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6	8						3	4
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5								2
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Background of the principals of this project:

Roland Jonker is a Toronto-based architect and principal of O.C.A. Architects in Toronto and O.C.A. Architects (BC) in Vancouver. In his more than 40 years in architecture, he has completed many Christian schools, churches, and retirement complexes across Canada. He is married to Jacoba (Coby), a career Christian school teacher and principal for many years and currently an educational consultant.

Joe Koole worked in banking for 42 years and retired in 2000. He is married to Joan and lives in Toronto. Each year since 2003, he has traveled with CRC work teams to places such as Romania, Uganda, Dominican Republic, and Haiti. On November 28, 2009, Koole will leave for another work visit to Haiti, DV.